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ONE IN A MILLION

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CHAPTER I.

"DO YOU desire me to marry him?" asked Miss Castle, quietly.

"Let me finish," said her uncle, "Jane," he added, turning on his sister, "if you could avoid sneezing for a few moments, I should be indebted to you."

Miss Jane Garcide, a sallow lady of 40, who suffered with colds all winter and hay-fever all summer, meekly left the room.

Miss Castle herself leaned on the piano, tearing the pink petals from a half-withered rose, while her guardian, the Hon. John Garcide, finished what he had to say and pulled out his cigar-case with decision.

"I have only to add," he said, "that James J. Crawford is one man in a million."

Her youthful adoration of Garcide had changed within a few years to a sweet-tempered indifference. He was aware of this; he was anxious to learn whether the change had also affected her inherited passion for truthfulness.

"Do you remember a promise you once made?" he inquired, lighting his cigar with care.

"Yes," she said, calmly.

"When was it?"

"On my tenth birthday."

He looked out of the heavily curtained window.

"Of course you could not be held to such a promise," he remarked.

"There is no need to hold me to it," she answered, flushing up as she spoke.

Her delicate sense of honor amused him; he lay back in his armchair, enjoying his cigar.

"It is curious," he said, "that you cannot recall meeting Mr. Crawford last winter."

"A girl has an opportunity to forget hundreds of faces after her first season," she said.

There was another pause; then Garcide went on: "I am going to ask you to marry him."

Her face paled a trifle; she bent her head in acquiescence. Garcide smiled. It had always been that way with the Castles. Their word, once given, ended all matters. And now Garcide was gratified to learn the value of a promise made to him by a mere child of ten.

"I wonder," said Garcide, plaintively, "why you never open your heart to me, Hilda?"

"I wonder, too," she said; "my father did."

Garcide turned his flushed face to the window.

Years before, when the firm of Garcide & Castle went to pieces, Peter Castle stood by the wreck to the end, patching it with his last dollar. But the wreck broke up, and he drifted piteously with the debris until a kindly current carried him into the last harbor, t' all—the port of human derelicts.

Garcide, however, contrived to cling to some valuable flotsam and paddle into calm water, and anchor.

After a few years he built a handsome house above Fiftieth street; after a few more years he built a new wing for Saint Herold's Hospital; and after a few

more years he did other things equally edifying, but which, if mentioned, might identify him.

Church work had always interested him. As a speculation in moral obligation, he adopted Peter Castle's orphan, who turned to him in a passion of gratitude and blind devotion. And as she bade fair to rival her dead mother in beauty and as rich men marry beauty when it is in the market, the Hon. John Garcide decided to control the child's future. A promise at ten years is quickly made, but he had never forgotten it, and she could not forget.

And now Garcide needed her as he needed mercy from Ophir Steel, which was slowly crushing his own steel syndicate to powder.

The struggle between Steel Plank and James J. Crawford's Ophir Steel is historical. The pure love of fighting was in Crawford: he fought Garcide to a standstill and then kicked him, filling Garcide with a mixture of terror and painful admiration.

But sheer luck caught at Garcide's coat-tails and hung it there. Crawford, prowling in the purlieus of society, had seen Miss Castle.

The next day Crawford came into Garcide's office and accepted a chair with such a humble and unctuous smile that Garcide mistook his conciliatory demeanor and attempted to bully him. But when he found out what Crawford wanted, he nearly fainted in an attempt to conceal his astonishment and delight.

"Do you think I'm going to sell an innocent child?" he said, lashing himself into a good imitation of an insulted gentleman.

Crawford looked out of the window, then rose and walked toward the door.

"Do you think I'm going to sell me?" shouted Garcide, after him. Crawford hesitated.

"Come back here," said Garcide, firmly; "I want you to explain yourself."

"I can't," muttered Crawford.

"Then try, anyway," said Garcide, more amiably.

And now this was the result of that explanation, an engagement of record; and Miss Castle had promised to wed a gentleman in Ophir Steel named Crawford, at the convenience of the Hon. John Garcide.

The early morning sunshine fell across the floor of the bird-room, filling the gloom with golden lights. It touched a strand of hair on Miss Castle's bent head.

"You'll like him," said Garcide, guiltily.

Her hand hung heavily on the piano keys.

"You have no other man in mind?" he asked.

"No. . . . no man."

Garcide chewed the end of his cigar.

"Crawford's all right, man. Don't make it hard for him," he said.

She swung around on the gilded music-stool, one white hand resting among the ivory keys.

"I shall spare us both," she said; "I shall tell him that it is settled."

Garcide rose; she received his caress with composure. He made another grateful pause at her chin.

"Why don't you take a quiet week or two in the country?" he suggested, cheerfully. "Go up to the Sagamore Club; Jane will go with you. You can have the whole place to yourselves. You always liked nature and—all that, eh?"

"Oh, yes," she said indifferently.

That afternoon the Hon. John Garcide sent a messenger to James J. Crawford with the following note:

"My Dear Jim:—Your manly and straightforward request for permission to address my ward, Miss Castle, has profoundly impressed me.

"I have considered the matter, I may say earnestly considered it.

"Under the sacred duties of guardianship forbid that I should interfere in any way with my dear child's happiness—if I can prevent it. It is your keeping. On the other hand, honor and decency prevent me from attempting to influence her. She is decision, which might prove acceptable to myself.

"I can therefore only grant you the permission you desire to address my ward. The rest lies with a propitious Providence. Cordially yours,

"JOHN GARCIDE.

"P. S.—My sister, Miss Garcide, and Miss Castle are going to the Sagamore Club tonight. I'll take you up there whenever you can get away."

To which came answer by messenger:

"Hon John Garcide:

"My Dear Garcide—Can't go for two weeks. My fool nephew Jim is on his vacation, and I don't know where he is prowling. Hastily yours,

"JAMES J. CRAWFORD.

"P. S.—There's a directors' meeting at three. Come down and we'll settle all quarrels."

To this the Hon. John Garcide telegraphed: "All right," and hurriedly prepared to escort his sister and Miss Castle to the midday express for Sagamore Hills.

CHAPTER II.

MISS CASTLE usually rose with the robins, when there were any in the neighborhood. There were plenty on the lawn around the Sagamore Club that dewy June morning, chirping, chirking, trilling, repeating their endless arias from tree to gatepost. And thru the outcry of the robins, the dry cackle of the purple grackles, and the catbird's whine floated earthward the melody of the golden orioles.

Miss Castle, fresh from the bath, breakfasted in her own rooms with an appetite that astonished her.

She was a wholesome, fresh-skinned girl, with a body that limbs a trifle heavy in the strict classical sense, straight-browed, blue-eyed, and very lovely and healthy.

Pensively she ate her toast, tossing a few crumbs at the robins; pensively she disposed of two eggs, a trout, and all the chocolate, and looked into the pitcher for more cream.

The swelling bird-music only intensified the deep, sweet country silence which brooded just beyond the lawn's wet limits; she saw the flat river tumbling in the sunlight; she saw the sky over all, its blue mystery untroubled by a cloud.

"I love all that," she said, dreamily, to her maid who waited her. "Undo my hair now; I want the wind to blow it."

The happy little winds of June, loitering among the lace and silver that came and blew her bright hair across her eyes, puff after puff of perfumed balm, and stirred the delicate stuff that clung to her, and she felt their caress on her bare feet.

"I must go and wade in that river," she said to her maid. "Dress me very quickly."

But when she was dressed the desire for childish things had passed away, and she raised her grave eyes to the reflected face in the mirror, considering them in silence.

"After all," she said, aloud, "I am young enough to have found happiness—if they had let me. . . . The sunshine is full out there, outdoors. . . . I could have found it. . . . I was not meant for men. . . . Still . . . it is all in the future yet. I will learn not to be afraid."

She made a little effort to smile at herself in the mirror, but the attempt could not carry her as far as that. So, with a quick, quaint gesture of adieu, she turned and walked rapidly out into the hallway.

Miss Garcide was in bed, sneezing patiently, "I've been out for my walk, dear," the poor lady, "so you will have to amuse yourself alone."

Miss Castle kissed her and went away lightly down the polished stairs to the great hall.

The steward came up to wish her good morning, and to place the resources of the club at her disposal.

"I don't know, Billy, hesitating at the veranda door; "I think a sun-bath is all I care for. You may hang a hammock under the maples, if you like. I suppose," she added, "that I am quite alone at the club?"

"One gentleman arrived this morning," said the steward—"Mr. Crawford."

She looked back, poised lightly in the doorway, and the full, golden sunlight shine poured. All the color had left her face. "Mr. Crawford," she said, in a dull voice.

"He has gone out after trout," continued the steward, briskly; "he is a rare rod, Miss Castle, Crawford. He caught the eight-pound fish—perhaps you noticed it on the panel in the billiard-room."

Miss Castle came into the hall again, and stepped over to the register. Under her signature, Miss Castle, was Crawford. She saw "J. Crawford, New York." The ink was still blue and faint.

She turned and walked out into the sunshine.

The future was no longer a gray, menacing thing; it was a monstrous, suddenly the terrifying present, and its shadow fell sharply around her in the sunshine.

Now all the courage of her race must be summoned, and must respond to the summons. Fear of what she was and but when had a Castle ever flinched at the face of fate under any mask?

She raised her resolute head; her eyes matched the sky—clear, unclouded, fathomless.

In hours of deep distress the sound of her own voice is a comfort. Speech must to endure; and now, as she walked across the lawn bareheaded, she told herself that the reckoning of which she had to be paid, not to quail because life held for her nothing of what she had dreamed.

If there was a tremor now and then in her low voice, none but the robins heard it; if she lay flung face downward in the grasses, under the screen of alders by the water, there was no one but the striped chipmunk to jeer and mock.

"Now listen, you silly girl," she whispered: "he cannot take away the sky and the sunshine from you! He cannot blind and deafen you, silly! Cry if you must, you little coward!—you will marry him all the same."

Suddenly sitting up, alert, she heard something singing. It was the river flowing close beside her.

She pushed away the screen of leaves and stretched out full length, looking down into the water.

Deep in the clear, his eyes were shining with an opal tint, his scarlet spots blazed like jewels.

And as she lay there her bright hair tumbled about her face, she heard, above the river's monotone, a sharp, whiplike sound—see-sash—and a silvery thread flashed out across her vision. It was a fishing-line and leader, and the fisherman who had cast it was standing fifty feet away upstream, hip-deep in the sunlit water.

Swish! swish! and the long line flew back, straightened far behind him, and again lengthened out, the single yellow-and-gilt fly settling on the water just above the motionless trout, who simply backed off downstream.

But there were further troubles for the optimistic angler; a tough alder stem, just under water, became entangled in the line; the fisherman gave a cautious jerk; the hook sank into the water-soaked wood, buried to the barb.

Then, and not until then, the fisherman, calmly.

Before she could realize what he was about, he had waded across the shallows and seized the alder branch. A dash of water showered him as he shook the hook free; she stood up with an involuntary gasp and met the astonished eyes of the fisherman.

He was a tall, sunburned young fellow, with powerful shoulders and an athletic figure. His rubber boots were also soaking wet and streaked with mud.

"Upon my word," he said, "I never saw you! Aren't you Miss Castle? I'm sorry for your sport—but I have. You were fishing, of course?"

"No, I'm only looking," she said. "Of course I've spoiled your sport."

"Not at all," he said, laughing; "that alder trick did for me."

"But there was a trout lying there—I saw him; and saw me, too, of course. He wouldn't rise to your cast. And I'm exceedingly sorry," she ended, smiling, "that I disturbed you."

Her hair was badly rumpled; she had been crying, and he could see it, but he had not looked upon her tear-stained, smiling, and disheveled loveliness.

As he looked and marveled, her smile died out; her left hand hit with a distinct shock that this water-logged specimen of sun-tanned manhood must be Crawford.

"Are you?" she said, scarcely aware that she spoke.

"What?" he asked, puzzled.

"Mr. Crawford?"

"Why, yes—and, of course, you are Miss Castle," he replied, smiling easily. "I saw your name in the guestbook this morning. Awfully glad you came, Miss Castle; hope you'll let me show you where the big fellows lie."

"I used to bait the fish," she said, with composure.

The shock of suddenly realizing that this man was her husband had to merge confused her; she made an effort to get things back into proper perspective, for her head was dizzy, and her eyes ached, and in her ears rang a strangely pleasant voice—Crawford's—saying all sorts of good-humored things, which she heard but scarcely comprehended.

Instinctively she raised her hands to touch her disordered hair; she stood there naively twisting it into shape again, her eyes constantly reverting to the sun-burned face of Crawford.

"And I have the pleasure of knowing your guardian, Mr. Garcide, very slightly—in a business way," he was saying, politely.

"Ophir Steel," she said.

He laughed.

"Oh, we are making a great battle," he said. "I'm only hoping we may come to an understanding with Mr. Garcide."

"I thought you had already come to an understanding," she observed, coldly.

"Have we? I hope so; I had not heard that," he said, quickly. "How did you hear—"

Without warning she flushed scarlet to her neck; and she was as amazed as he at the surging color staining her white skin.

She could not endure that—she could not face him—she felt her head lift a little in recognition of his presence and stepped past him, out along the river-bank.

He looked after her, wondering what he could have said.

She wondered, too, and her wonder grew that instead of self-pity, repugnance, and deep dread, she should feel such a divine relief from the terror that had possessed her.

Now at least she knew the worst. This was the man!

She strove to place him, to recall his face. She could not. All along she had pictured Crawford as an older man. And this broad-shouldered, tanned young fellow was Crawford, after all! Where could her memory have been? How natural that her indifference should have so utterly blinded her!

She stood a moment on the lawn, closing her eyes.

Oh, now she had no difficulty in recalling his face—in fact the difficulty was to shut it out, for it was before her eyes, open or shut—it was before her when she entered her bedroom and sank into a cushioned chair by the breezy window. And she took her burning cheeks in both hands and rested her elbows on her knees.

Thy terror had fled. It shamed her to find herself thanking God that her fate was to lie in the keeping of this young man. It was natural, too, for the child had nigh died of horror, the courage of the Castles had held her head high in the presence of the intolerable. And how suddenly into her gray and hopeless future, peopled by the phantoms of the past, stepped a strong, smiling young fellow, with gentle manners and honest speech, and a quick courtesy which there was no mistaking.

She had no mother—nobody to talk to—so she laid long ago made a confidante of her own reflection, which shook in the glass. And to the mirror she now went, meeting the reflected eyes shyly, yet smiling with friendly curiosity.

"Silly! to frighten yourself! It is all over now, like a young and tall and mature Jane Eyre. Stepped into a great deal—but don't be frightened, he is not a bit dreadful, . . . only . . . It is pretty . . . but I suppose he will be in love with me, . . . and, after all, it doesn't matter, . . . only I am—sorry . . . for him. . . . If he had only cared for a girl who could love him! . . . I suppose I shall . . . cry . . . ever! But I will be very kind to him. . . . I will try to make up."

CHAPTER III.

SHE saw him every day; she dined at the club table now.

Her friendliness for Crawford increased with the ripening summer, and she lay in her room with all windows closed, sneezing and coughing with Mrs. Garcide.

When Miss Castle told her that Mr. Crawford was a guest at the club, Miss Garcide wept over her for an hour.

"I feel like weeping, too," said Miss Castle, tremulously—"but not over myself."

"Dot over hib!" inquired Miss Garcide.

"Yes, over him. He ought to marry a girl who could love him, I suppose."

Meanwhile Crawford was dining every evening with her at the great club table, and he and Miss Castle saw how a black bear had come splashing across the shallows within a few rods of where they were fishing, and how the deer had increased, and were even nibbling the succulent green stalks in the vegetable-garden of the club.

During the day she found herself looking forward to his return and his jolly, spirited stories of the day's adventurous, and never tiresome, technical, nor conceited narrative. Three years had held the club cup for the best fish taken on Sagamore water.

She took sun-baths in her hammock, she read books on the great hearth in reverie, blue eyes skyward, arms under her head, swayed in her hammock by the veranda, and tried to think of nothing.

All her composure and common-sense had returned. She began to experience a certain feeling of friendliness for Crawford—a feeling almost maternal.

"He's so amusingly shy about speaking," she told Miss Garcide. "I suppose he's anxious and bashful. I think I'll tell him that I am a Castle, and arranged. Besides, I promised Mr. Garcide to speak. I don't see why I don't; I'm not a bit embarrassed."

But the days went shining by, and a new week dawned, and Miss Castle had not taken pity upon her tongue-tied lover.

"Oh, this is simply dreadful," she argued with herself. "Besides, I want to know how soon the man expects to marry me. I've a few things to purchase. If that's what he is here for, the thing to do is thrown together in a day, he's a—a man!"

That evening she determined to fulfill her promise to Garcide as scrupulously as she kept all her promises.

She came, white at dinner, with a great bunch of wild iris that Crawford had brought her. Towards the end of the dinner she began to be frightened, but it was the instinct of the Castles to fight fear and overcome it.

"I'm going to walk down to the little footbridge," she said, steadily, examining the coffee in her tiny cup; "and if you will stroll down with your cigar, I . . . I will tell you something."

"That will be very jolly," he said. "There's a full moon, I mean to have a try at a thumping big fish in the pool above."

She nodded, and he rose and attended her to the door.

Then he lighted a cigar and called for a telegram blank.

This is what he wrote:

IN NEXT week's Ledger be sure and read Mason Ray's extraordinary story, "THE WRATH OF GOD; or, A NEW ADAM AND EVE." It is a strange story of the destruction of the world of humanity on account of its wickedness, and how it was renewed. Boys, take a slant at Milford Merrill's new story in this issue, called, "THE BOY WOODSMAN; or, THE CEDAR POND GUARD." It is a capital story.

"James J. Crawford, 316 New Broad Street, N. Y.:

"I am at the Sagamore. When do you want me to return?

"JAMES H. CRAWFORD."

The servant took the bit of yellow paper. Crawford lay back smoking and thinking of trout and forests and blue skies and blue eyes that he should miss very, very soon.

Meanwhile the possessor of the blue eyes was standing on the little footbridge that crossed the water below the lawn.

A faint freshness came upward to her from the water, cooling her face. She looked down into the sparkling dusk which hangs over woodland rivers, and she saw the ripples, all silvered, flowing under the moon, and the wild-cherry blossoms trembling and quivering with the gray wings of moths.

"Surely," she said, aloud—"surely there is something in the world besides men. I love them—all of it! I do indeed. I could find happiness here; I do not think I was made for men."

For a long while she stood, bending delicate nose a trifle, sniffing at the air, which suddenly became faintly spiced with tobacco smoke.

Where did the smoke come from? She turned instinctively. On a rock upstream stood young Crawford, smoking peacefully, and casting a white fly into the dusky water. Swish! the silk line whistled out into the dusk.

After a few moments' casting, she saw him step ashore and saunter toward the bridge, where she was standing; then his step jarred the structure and he came up, cap in one hand, rod in the other.

"I thought perhaps you might like to try a cast," he said, pleasantly. "There's a good-sized fish in the pool above; I raised him twice. He'll scale close to five pounds, I fancy."

"Thank you," said Miss Castle; "that is very generous of you, because you are deliberately sacrificing the club loving-cup if I cast that fish."

He said, laughing: "I've held the cup before. Try it, Miss Castle; that is a five-pound fish, and the record this spring is four and a half."

She took the rod; he went first and she held out her hand so that he could steady her across the stones and out into the dusk.

"My skirts are soaked with the dew, anyway," she said. "I don't mind a wetting."

He unslung his landing-net and waited ready: she sent the line whirling into the darkness.

"To the right," he said.

For ten minutes she stood there casting in silence. Once a splash in the shadows set his nerves quivering, but it was only a muskrat.

"By the way," she said, quietly, over her shoulder, "I know why you and I have met here."

And as Crawford said nothing she reeled in her line, and held out her hand to him as a signal that she wished to come ashore.

He aided her, taking the rod and guiding her carefully across the dusky stepping-stones to the bank.

She shook out her damp skirts, then raised her face, which had grown a trifle pale.

"I will marry you, Mr. Crawford," she said, bravely,—"and I hope you will make me love you Mr. Garcide wishes it—I understand . . . that you wish it. You must not feel embarrassed, . . . nor let me feel embarrassed. Come and talk it over. Shall we?"

There was a rustic seat on the riverbank; she sat down in one corner.

His face was in shadow; he had dropped his rod and landing-net abruptly. And now he stood in uncertain step toward her and sat down at her side.

"I want you to make me love you," she said, frankly; "I hope you will; I shall do all I can to help you. But—unless I do—won't you remember that I do not love you." As he was silent, she went on: "Take me as a comrade; I will go where you wish. I am ready as a good comrade; I can do what men do. You shall see! It will be pleasant, I think."

After a little while she said, in a low voice which was not perfectly steady: "Miss Castle, I am going to tell you something you must both hear. I do not believe that Mr. Garcide has authorized me to offer myself to you."

"He told me that he advised it," she said. "That is why he brought us together. And he also said," she added, hastily, "that you were very wash-ful. So I thought it best to make it easy for us both. I hope I have."

Crawford sat motionless for a long while. At last he passed his hands over his eyes, leaning forward and looking into her face.

"I've simply got to be honest with you," he said; "I know there is a mistake."

"No, there is no mistake," she said, bending her head and looking him in the eyes—"unless you have made the mistake—unless," she said, quickly—"you do not want me."

"Want you!" he stammered, catching fire of a sudden—"want you, you beautiful child! I love you if ever man loved on earth! Want you?" His hand fell heavily on hers, and closed. For an instant their palms lay close together; her heart almost stopped; then a swift flame flew to her face and she struggled to withdraw her fingers twisted in his.

"You must not do that," she said, breathlessly. "I do not love you—I warned you!"

He said: "You must love me! Can't you understand? You made me love you—you made me! Listen jo me—it is all a mistake—but it is too late now. I did not dare even think of you—I simply got to tell you the truth—I did not dare think of you—I must say it—and I can't understand how I could ever have seen you and not loved you. But when you spoke—when I touched you——"

"Please, please," she said, faintly, "let me go! It is not a mistake; I—I am glad that you love me; I will try to love you. I want to—I believe I can——"

"You must!"

"Yes, . . . I will. . . . Please let me go!"

Breathless and crimson, she fell back into her corner, staring at him. He dropped his arm on the back of the rustic seat.

Presently he laughed uncertainly, and struck his forehead with his open hand.

"It's a mistake," he said; "and if it is a mistake, Heaven help the other man!"

She watched him with curious dismay. Never could she have believed that the touch of a man's hand could thrill her; never had she imagined that the words of a man could set her heart leaping to meet his stammered vows. A new shame set her very limbs quaking as she strove to rise. The distress in her eyes, the

The fisherman was upstream.

new fear, the pitiful shyness, called to him for mercy.

For a miracle he understood the mute appeal, and he took her hand in his quietly and made her good night, saying he would stay and smoke a while.

"Good night," she said; "I am really tired. I would rather you stayed here. Do you mind?"

"No," he said.

"Then I shall go back alone."

He watched her across the lawn. When she had gone he sat down on the bank and saw him standing there in the moonlight.

And that night, as her little silver hand-glass reflected her brilliant cheeks, she veiled her face in her bright hair and knelt down by her bedside.

But all she could say was, "I love him—truly I love him!" which was one kind of prayer, after all.

CHAPTER IV.

A DEEP, sweet happiness awoke her ere the first pink robin chirped. Ever since the first pink light touched Eden had such a rosy day dawned for any maid on earth.

She awoke in love; her enchanted eyes unclosed on a world she had never known.

Unashamed, she held out her arms to the waking world and spoke her lover's name aloud. Then the young blood leaped in her, and her eyes were like stars after a rain.

Oh, she must hasten now, for there was so little time to live in the world, and every second counted. Healthy of body, wholesome of soul, innocent and ardent, in her new-born happiness, she could scarcely endure the rush of golden moments lost in an impetuous bath, in twisting up her bright hair, in the quick knotting of a ribbon, the click of a buckle on knee and shoe.

Then, as she slipped down the stairs into the darkened hall, trepidation seized her, for she heard his step.

He came swinging along the hallway; she stood still, trembling. He came up quickly and took her hands; she did not move; his arm encircled her waist; he lifted her head; it lay back on his shoulder, and her eyes met his.

"All day together," he was saying; and her soul leaped to meet his words, but she could not speak.

He held her at arms'-length, laughing, a little troubled.

"Mystery of mysteries," he said, under his breath; "there is some blessed Heaven-directed mistake in this. Is there, sweetheart?"

"No," she said.

"And if there was?"

"Can you ask?"

"Then come to breakfast, heart of my heart!—the moments are flying very swiftly, and there is only this day left—until tomorrow. Listen! I hear the steward moving like a gray rat in the pantry. Can we endure a steward in Eden?"

"Only during breakfast," she said, laughing. "I smell the wheaten flapjacks, and, oh, I am famished!"

There have been other breakfasts—Barmecide breakfasts compared with their first crust broken in love.

But they ate—oh, indeed, they ate everything before them, from flapjacks to the piles of little, crisp treat. And they might have called for more, but there came, on tiptoe, the steward, bowing,

Heedless of the protests of the scandalized belted kingfishers, they embarked on Sagamore Water.

The paddle flashed in the sunlight; the quick river caught the blade, the spray floated shoreward.

CHAPTER V.

LATE in the afternoon the canoe, heavily festooned with dripping water-lilies, moved like a shadow over the shining sands. The tall hemlocks walled the river with palisades unbroken; the calm water stretched away into the forest's somber depths, barred here and there by dusty sunbeams.

Over them, in the highest depths of the unclouded blue, towered an eagle, suspended from mid-zenith. Under them the shadow of their craft swept the yellow gravel.

Knee to knee, vis-a-vis, wrapped to their souls in the enchantment of each other, sat the entranced voyagers. Their rods lay idle beside them; life was serious just then for people who stood on the threshold of separation.

"I simply shall depart this life if you go tomorrow," she said, looking at him. The unfeigned misery in his face made her smile hardship, but she would not permit him to touch her.

"See to what you have brought me!" she said. "I am very unable to live without you. And now what are you going to do with me?"

Her eyes were very tender. He caught her hand and kissed it, and laid it against his cheek.

"There is a way," he said.

"A way?"

"Shall I lead? Would you follow?"

"What do you mean?" she asked, amused.

"There is a way," he repeated. "That thread of a brook leads to it."

He pointed off to the westward, where thru the forest a stream, scarcely wider than the canoe, flowed deep and silent between its mounds of moss.

He picked up the paddle and touched the blade to the water; the canoe swung westward.

"Where are you taking me?" she asked.

But the canoe was already in the narrow stream, and he was laughing recklessly, setting-pole poised to swing round the short turns.

"If we turned back now," she said, "it would be sunset before we reached the club."

"What do we care?" he laughed. "Look!"

Without warning, a yellow glory broke thru the trees, and the canoe shot out into a vast, flat country, drenched with the rays of the sinking sun.

Blue woods belted the distance; all in front of them was dead, moist meadowland, carpeted with thickets of wild iris, thru which the stream wound in pools of gold.

The beauty of it held her speechless; the spell was upon him, too, and he sat motionless, the water dripping from his steel-tipped setting-pole in drops of fire.

There was a figure moving in the distant meadow; the sun glimmered, and something that might have been a long reed quivering.

"An old friend fishing yonder," he said, quietly: "I knew he would be there." He touched her and pointed to the distant figure. "That is the parson over yonder," he said. "We will need him before we go to London."

She looked across the purple fields of iris. Suddenly his meaning flashed out like a sunbeam.

"Do—do you wish—that—now?" she faltered.

He picked up the paddle; she caught his hand, trembling.

"No, no!"—she whispered, with bent head—"I cannot; don't take me so—so quickly. Truly we must be mad to think of it."

He held the paddle poised after a long while, then laid it from the blade and she looked up into his eyes. The canoe moved on.

"Then we are quite mad," she said, unsteadily.

"I am glad we are," he said.

The canoe, at the touch of the paddle woke the drowsing red-winged blackbirds from the reeds; the gray snipe wheeled out across the marsh in flickering flight.

The aged parson of Foxville, intent on his hobby of trout, looked up with mild surprise to see a canoe, heavily hung with water-lilies, glide into his pool and wing-shot duck.

The parson of Foxville was a very old man—almost too old to fish for trout.

Crawford, with his arm around the trembling Miss Castle, somewhat frightened, knee-deep in the purple iris.

Then the canoe came toddling to her and took her hand, and peered at her with his aged eyes, saying, "You are quite mad, my child, and very young, and very, very young. So I think, after all, you would be much safer if you were married."

Somebody encircled her waist; she turned and looked into the eyes of her lover, and still looking at him, she laid her hands in his.

A wedding amid the iris, all gray with the hovering, misty wings of moths—that was her fate—with the sky a canopy of fire above her, and the curlew calling thru the kindling dusk, and the

(Continued on Page 11.)

DANDY JIM

By Hapsburg Liebe

NEVER was there a man wholly like him —this queer mixture of sagacity and drivel, cynic, philosopher and funny fellow. His name was Bateseford. He was a Kentuckian of very blue blood, and he was a gambler of the "gentleman" type, the exceedingly romantic type; he gambled for the sheer excitement of it, and he would have staked his soul immortal when everything else was gone. Fear he did not know, and loyalty to his friends was the first law in his particular code of honor. Next to his passion for gambling was an inordinate liking for jewels and fine clothes; he wore black broadcloth, patent-leather shoes, broad-rimmed black Stetson hat, and stiff white shirts, with black silk four-in-hand ties, always; on the finger of which there was a big diamond, and there were diamonds in his cuff-buttons and in his watch case. He was a big man, as a mountaineer, brown-eyed, black-haired, fair-skinned as a baby; his very hands, very handsome hands as they were, no matter what their station in life, looked at twice and remembered long. Even the devil in him was somehow lovable.

He heard of Singleton Plains by accident; was driving in his automobile when Singleton Plains is a little town in the foothills of Tennessee's mountains, and it was over the Pinnacle Road, through the lumber king. There were some two score small white-and-green cottages, a hotel and a bandstand, a church and a schoolhouse and a lodge hall, a few stores, and a monster double-band sawmill. Narrow-gauge logging railroads ran into the blue hills in almost every direction, and a broad-gauge railroad connected the place with the little city twenty miles away in the lowland. In this little city were the home and the general offices of Singleton Plains.

As it was in the hottest of the summer months, and as the country around Singleton is noted for its cool air and its water, its rugged scenery and its trout streams, nobody wondered when the well-dressed Kentuckian stepped from the train and inquired for a hotel. He found comfortable lodgings awaiting him, and within four hours later the hotel-keeper was swearing by him. There was a grand and taking way about Bateseford, and he tipped like a prince.

Old Singleton's only son was general manager over the big mills and all the lumbering operations. He had been given that important and responsible position in the hope that it would cure him of his leanings toward profligacy, and his desire to become one of the world's great sportsmen. Bateseford learned from Ad Bunner, his host. Ad Bunner was a lanky, garrulous fellow, who had no secrets in life for anybody who would hunt with him.

"Introduce me to Bradley Singleton," requested Bateseford, as they sat down to supper. They were standing on the half-dark hotel veranda.

"Sure, I'll do it," agreed Bunner, glad to oblige. "He's in the lobby now."

They went to the lobby, which was a big, plain room, and sat in two high-backed hickory rockers, with the clerk's office and a cigar counter at one end of it and a writing desk at the other. Bunner pointed to a tall, sallow, worried-looking young man who stood reading a newspaper by the yellow electric light. "That's him," he said. "Come on."

He introduced them and left, and they sat down in two of the big rockers. Singleton produced his cigar case, and demanded neither thanks nor fee.

"What's your line, Bateseford?"

"Thanks," smiled the gambler. "I don't smoke, as a rule, cigars. My line is having one continual round. My old man up in Kentuck' is worth lots of money—owns a big cotton works —and I don't have to do anything I don't want to. I'm that fortunate."

Bradley Singleton looked Bateseford over. To appear particularly innocent and particularly gullible was one of Bateseford's strong points, and he appeared particularly innocent and particularly gullible now.

"I wonder if you ever play poker?" said Singleton. "I'm dying for a game of poker. It's out of the world here; nobody ever plays here. If you play, suppose we go to my rooms and have a game?"

"For fun?"

"For fun!" Singleton laughed uproariously. "Listen to him! He asks if I want to play poker for fun! With buttons, or matches, or beans—eh? Oh, Bateseford, Bateseford, you give me a pain! Truly, ignorance is bliss."

There was a note of insolence in his voice, and it was not lost on the gambler. Bateseford rose, bent forward, and put a hand on the other's arm.

"No," he said. "Bliss is ignorance." And then he went on evenly: "If you'll teach me how to play, I'll play you for bigger stakes than you ever played for before. If you're game, lead the way; if you're not, say no more about it."

Singleton, too, rose. "Let's go," he muttered.

They went upstairs and the general manager took the Kentuckian to a room that was well stocked with college pennants, firearms, fishing tackle, deers' antlers, and pictures of bare-armed and smiling women. They sat down at a small table, and Singleton produced a pack of gilt-edged cards. Then he painstakingly and eagerly showed Bateseford how the game of poker went.

Before midnight Bateseford had won more than four hundred dollars of the general manager's money.

"The usual beginner's luck!" growled Singleton, rising gloomily. "Now, you know, Bateseford, you are honor bound to play with me again, so that I may have a chance to win back what I've lost."

"All right," easily. "Tomorrow night we'll play again."

Bateseford went to his room and went to bed.

That was the beginning of young Bradley Singleton's second downfall. Bradley Singleton, pampered and spoiled, permitted from the days of his babyhood to have everything he fancied, had been won back to the straight path less than a year before at a great cost.

During the nights that followed he developed a fever for gambling that was hotter than any he had ever before known. And he lost, always he lost. His face, even in its blankest expression, kept no secrets from the Kentuckian.

But it was not until their tenth evening together that Bateseford knew what was happening to the other. Singleton had just set out a bottle of whiskey. It was a big bottle, and Bateseford rose above the devil that was in him.

"We'd better cut this out," he said, throwing the cards to the table with a melodramatic flourish. "It's taking you too far. Fellow, I say, why can't I lose like a man, and who isn't big enough to quit anything. If I have my way, Brad, I'll not play with you any more."

Singleton leaned across the table. The fever was in his face, in his eyes; his lips were quivering.

"You won't play with me any more!" he snapped. "After you've won every thing I could get my hands on, you won't play with me any more—you won't give me a chance to win my money back! You d—d piker!"

"Cut the cards," clipped Bateseford.

Singleton cut, and Bateseford dealt. "You're a geranium, you are."

That night Bateseford won again.

The next day Miss Elizabeth Singleton came up to Johnsboro to see her brother and to find out what had come over him. He had ceased his weekly visits home, they knew, and he had left over the telephone, and she knew that something was wrong. Also she brought bad news to her sister; the heart was bad, the doctors said, and he would have to be careful.

Young Singleton explained that he had been very busy, and that explanation satisfied his sister. The old lumber king's daughter was a fragile, fluffy-haired, as sweet as wild honey, and as full of life as a boomer-squirrel, and the two children of the house fell in love for the first time in his life. It wasn't difficult to see that she looked upon him as the greatest and noblest woman had done. His very name was a recommendation; who had not heard of the Bateseford of Kentuck'. Besides, was he not her brother's friend?

A few days after her arrival at Singleton Plains, in the afternoon, he went with her for a horseback ride to the crest of Sunday Mountain, where the everlasting winds blew cannily at the pines to grove scrubby and one-sided; and there on that lofty eminence, with their heads in the clouds, he blurted out that he loved her. He had forgotten everything save that she was the one woman.

"The air up here is intoxicating," she said in reply to his impassioned declaration. "Perhaps it has gone to your head. Let us go back."

But in her blue eyes there was a smile that made him ecstatically happy.

When they had reached the hotel, Bateseford went to his room, threw his broad-rimmed black hat to the floor, and sat himself down at an open window. At last he had found something serious in life, something vastly different from anything he had ever known before. Always he had looked at life as a mere plaything; now he realized in full measure the seriousness of living. And he realized other things, and among them stood out the iron fact that he was largely responsible for the second downfall of the generous but weak-willed brother of the woman whom he loved.

Finally he rose, clasped his hands behind him, and began to pace the floor. Then he began to talk to himself.

"I'm done with the red life," was one of the things he said; "I'm glad I'm still clean in most ways. I'll be clean altogether from this day on, so help me God. Whether or not I ever see her again, I'll be clean altogether from this day on."

He made a little fire in the grate, and burned his playing cards.

On the late afternoon train from Johnsboro there came that day a traveling man who knew Bateseford, who had once lost much money to Bateseford. Half an hour after nightfall the Kentuckian overheard a conversation between Bradley and Elizabeth Singleton and the salesman. They sat on the front veranda, before a lighted window; Bateseford stood in the shadows, less than twenty feet away.

"I see that Dandy Jim has honored—or, rather, dishonored—Singleton Plains with a visit," the salesman began man.

"Dandy Jim?" inquired both brother and sister.

"Bateseford, Dandy Jim Bateseford," went on the informer. "The most notorious gambler in the South. He always has a pack of gilt-edged cards. A new poker face is simply a mirror to Dandy Jim. He's worth enough hard cash to buy this town, and he won it all at cards."

The Singletons sat very still and said nothing. Bateseford, behind, he saw the girl turn pale; but the light that shone thru the window was not strong, and he couldn't be sure. The salesman continued:

"His father owns a big engine works, and his people are fine folks; but he—he is a colossal cheat."

At this Bateseford walked toward the fire. His face was white, and his hands were clinched.

"I figured that I'd hear just what I've heard, Kitty," said Brad. "So I pretended. I did it because I wanted a chance to have my say. And now, with your permission, I'll have it. I'll say it."

He went on quietly: "You're sore at me, Nicholson, because I won a bunch of money from you at poker. I'm sorry, but I want to correct two of your statements. First, I am not worth anything like what you say I am, and I am not a cheat. I have never taken a cent from a man who couldn't afford to lose it, and I have never played a crooked game. After all, what is the most of life but a gamble of one sort or another? Some people like betting on chances. When we are born we take chances; when we marry we take chances; when we die we take chances. When you buy stocks, bonds, or cotton futures you gamble. Wall street and Monte Carlo—what's the difference, Nicholson? A wolf is a wolf, and a sheep is a sheep, no matter where they are or what they're doing; and when you cut insurance, aren't you merely betting a certain sum against a certain other sum that your house won't burn by fire or your life by death? I'll not try to defend myself any further, but will say this: I wish I hadn't done it, Nicholson."

He turned and walked slowly away, and no word was spoken to him. In a minute after he had gone, Elizabeth Singleton rose and followed him. She found him around the corner, at one end of the veranda; he was sitting on the railing, half hidden among blooming honeysuckle vines.

"Now I understand what it is that has come over my brother—it is your villainous influence," she said scathingly, in a low, white voice. "I want you to leave Singleton Plains immediately—immediately, do you understand?"

He winced and bent his head. The girl went back to the corner.

An hour afterward, while Bateseford sat in his room in the dark and thought of grandiose things, there was a rap at his door.

"Come in," he invited, rising to turn on a light.

The door opened, and Bradley Singleton entered. He carried in his hands what looked like a package wrapped in heavy paper, and this he put down on the table.

"Bateseford," he said, smiling weakly, "I'm in a hole."

"What kind of a hole?"

"Singleton's angered. I'm not whining, you know." He continued: "I believe I can trust you. In fact, I'll have to trust you. The money I lost to you was father's money. He may come up here any day, and if he finds out the truth—I mean—he's got a bad heart, you know. He came to see if I could sell you an invention of mine. I've worked on it for a year, and I've got it perfected."

He unwrapped the thing he had brought. It was a small model of a double-cylinder steam engine. Bateseford went to the table; as well as he knew the game of poker he knew steam engines—he had been brought up with steam engines on every side of him.

"The ordinary engine has only one cylinder to push the piston both ways," explained Singleton. "This, you see, has two cylinders; one to push the piston forward, and one to push it backward. It ought to revolutionize things."

"By gad!" exclaimed Bateseford. "You've got it! Is it patented?"

"No. I've just finished it. I want to sell you the model, the idea, and the right to patent it."

"If you'll promise never to take another dollar from me and never to offer card," said Bateseford, "I'll sure talk business with you."

Singleton agreed, and Bateseford paid him all the money he had won from him for the model, the idea, and the right to patent it.

Twice in two days Bateseford packed his baggage to leave Singleton Plains in compliance with Miss Singleton's wishes, but he couldn't go. He couldn't leave her. Several times he sought an audience with her, but she wouldn't grant it. And yet, he knew that she cared for him; he read it in her face and in her blue eyes.

There came an afternoon when she walked out alone on the trail that led to Sunday Mountain, and he saw her and followed her. He hastened thru the laurels and managed to meet her on the trail. She halted and stepped to a mossy spot, and she was looking down at her immaculately white shoes.

Bateseford took off his black broadcloth coat and threw the fine garment over the puddle, took off his broad-rimmed hat and bowed as Sir Walter Raleigh might have done.

"Walk over, my lady!" he said gallantly.

Miss Elizabeth Singleton was equal to the occasion. She walked across the coat, and she took more steps than were necessary in order that she might press it deeper into the mud. She passed him without a word, without even a look of recognition.

But Dandy Jim was no quitter. He followed her; he told her that he wanted her, that he had changed the course of his life for her, that he would wait any number of years that she might name; he wanted to prove to her that his change was real.

"You took advantage of brother's temporary financial embarrassment, and bought his invention for a song!" she threw back over her shoulder. "Brad didn't tell me that; but he told me he'd sold it for a song, and he told me what he got for it, and he must have been financially embarrassed or he wouldn't have sold it for that!" bitterly.

"Will you allow me to prove to you that you are wrong?" asked Bateseford.

Something in his voice caused her to give in to him. He led her to a creek and to a pool under a hemlock tree; he waded into the knee-deep water with his hands, and threw Bradley Singleton's double-cylinder engine to the bank!

"It is almost an exact copy of one of the first of all steam engines," he told her, "and it isn't worth ten cents. I bought it with the money I won from your brother, and I made him promise that he'd never throw another card or take another drink—and he'll keep his promise. Now, tell me: How many years must I wait for you—how many years of probation? I want it to take to satisfy you that my change is no fake—five, seven, ten?"

"Seven," she said. "Seven," smiled Miss Elizabeth Singleton, "that we make it just one—don't! You're wet—you're awfully wet!"

Ohio Philosophy.

An entry of no little interest and importance is made in editorial type-mistakes contest is submitted by the Reesville correspondent to a Sabina (Ohio) weekly and is treated in the humorous vein but, in the light of subsequent events, a really fortunate experience which a long ago befell Mr. Lige Severs, the prominent unconquerable soul of near Reesville.

Promptly upon the stroke of the powerful alarm clock the other morning Mr. Severs and his entire household awakened to their responsibilities, enjoyed an elaborate breakfast and went about their daily tasks, Mr. Severs himself being already fully equipped for being prepared for his day's useful toil when, happening by good luck to glance with his wonted scan at the morning's fortunate but, in the rich of subsequent events, a really fortunate experience which a long ago befell Mr. Lige Severs, the prominent unconquerable soul of near Reesville.

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Instead of repining and chuntering over the unexpected reappearance of his astonishment that it was not yet 7 a. m

The Windfair Mystery

-:- Or -:-

Keeneyes in Disguise

By J. Breckenridge Ellis

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CHAPTER XI.

"KELLOGG" was still wondering what means, or thru what influence, the maid could hope to arrange the interview between Miss Jetty Edge and Roger Woolcraft at the summerhouse—as if they were puppets in her hands—when Mr. Pettyberg brought in the gardener.

The gentleman looked at the detective keenly, asking if he had learned anything of note thus far, and departed with the assurance that the other was "getting on."

The gardener, a middle-aged man with red face and red hair, tall and wiry and muscular, met the investigator's gaze with fearless blue eyes, and at once made the impression of being there honest with himself and means to be honest with all the world.

"Kellogg" explained just what he wanted, and gave him the assurance he had given the others, that he might speak confidentially and frankly with no danger of betrayal.

Sam Trouth—the gardener—explained that he was not working for Mr. Pettyberg twenty years ago and had known Emory Barstow only by sight. As to his guilt, Sam had not formed any opinion that based upon the trial. He had attended the trial, and had been fully convinced that the prisoner deserved his sentence. It stood to reason that if he hadn't been guilty he wouldn't have been "one of the gang" that knew the guilty men to "get off," but he'd never known an innocent man "stuck." As to whether or not Emory Barstow had committed the recent depredations, that might or might not be the case—but if so, he was only one of a certain number, and the gardener thought he knew the leader of the "gang."

"That's what I'm after," "Kellogg" declared, "and if you can find the guilty parties and prove their guilt, I'll pay you five hundred dollars out of my own pocket—accept this bill as an evidence of my sincerity."

"Not at all—don't pay me yet, for I've done nothing," returned Sam, taking the money, however, even as he spoke, and swiftly stowing it away. "It's too much!

—It's too much! Well, thank you, sir. And now I'll tell you who I know is at the bottom of the whole difficulty. No, who I think I know, but who I know I know. That maid was just in here talking to your Sonia Wolf. Of course, she's no friend of yours, as you're a stranger in these parts, but she was with you inside fifteen minutes. She had a long enough for Zenia to pull the wool over the eyes of a man smarter than me. I don't know about you."

"Kellogg" listened attentively.

"I'd hate to say anything against her, for she's a woman and a woman is foolish—and pretty, too; and so I won't say anything against her. But I was born and raised in this place, and I know her and her family as well as you know the best known thing you know. Well, that Torbitt family has been a scandal and a Windfair, so wild and reckless and mean, ing up troubles. The men-folks drank and fought and threatened and balled, and the women-folks did as they shouldn't. I don't say anything against Zenia, and I don't think she's any worse than does. She took respectability as her line from a kid, and she's made the thing go. But she has a few of the wild brothers that can't get low enough. They're trying it all the time, but ain't struck bottom yet, and I'm going to their credit is that they keep themselves from being catched up with."

He paused for breath, then resumed with relish:

"Ain't I giving you your money's worth? I'll guess, yes. Now, them brothers and that father of Zenia's, they don't stay in Windfair; it's too hot for 'em. They've got a saloon down in the fire at Ashton, and a dance hall further down at Lamar, and in my opinion they floated the stolen goods from here down river to their joints. I don't say Zenia helped 'em, but she knows mighty well they done it, and she tries to throw dust in our eyes by letting on she thinks Mr. Woolcraft is in the deal. Didn't she tell you that Woolcraft and Miss Edge are pardners in it all?"

"I don't feel at liberty to tell what Miss Zenia thinks."

"You don't have to; I know what she says she thinks. Now, Mr. Woolcraft and Miss Edge just naturally despises each other. I'm on the place enough to see it. They can't bear one another's sight. Why, if he comes out in the garden and catches sight of her, he pops back into the house like he was shot. And yet Zenia has the gall to pretend to think that this is all put on, and that in secret they understand one another, and are at the bottom of all the robberies. She's told me so, swearing me over to not tell, and I'll bet she's told you!"

"Is all this a mere opinion?" asked the detective, somewhat bewildered not only by the rapidity of the other's words, but by the conflicting ideas that had been thrust upon him since first coming to the library.

"It's more than that. Now I know a man, and let us call him 'Mr. A,' who told me something in confidence. I know the man as well as if he was my brother, and he's a man that couldn't lie, and he made me swear never to give him up, so I can't tell his name, only his story. He was in at the stealing of Mrs. Woolcraft's plate."

"What You really know one of the men who came here that night?"

"I know him inside and out. 'Mr. A' is what we'll call him. Yes, sir, he went down to Ashton to the bunch—the Torbitts—Zenia's three brothers and her father—and they plotted stealing the piano and floating it downstream to the Torbitt saloon. They got a wagon and team all ready, and they has their boat properly moored not far away, and here they come, and they done it slick as a whistle that opens the side-door, showing he'd been here before—don't ask me if he got that key from Zenia, for I don't know.

"Is what you are telling me the absolute fact, something that could be proved?"

"It's Gospel. And in they comes and takes out that piano without any fuss or worry, for they knew Mrs. Woolcraft and seven fifth holds the horses ready to make off with the load. They hefts the piano into the wagon, and drives cautious down to the river where the boat should be, but isn't. And why? Don't ask me, for I don't know. The boys raked the bunch that somebody is 'on,' and what's to pay? In about two minutes of whispering they decides to heave the piano into an old deserted barn that nobody would think of looking into to find a beautiful mahogany piano, so they done it, and 'Mr. A' says the piano is there yet. All of 'em wore masks, as experienced crooks would, of course, but 'Mr. A' knew Zenia on his Bible, if he's got one, that two of the fellows was Simon-pure Torbitts, and naturally he suspicioned all the bunch. When he planned the deal in their saloon, nobody was in the back room but himself and the two Torbitts, for I reckon they might have got a pal to take the place of one or two of them, but if so, why so? That's why I don't know for certain but what Emory Barstow might have been in the bunch, who can tell? But 'Mr. A' knows that at least two of 'em were Torbitts, for he had occasion to do talking to 'em on the trip, and he knowed their voices.

"Where is this acquaintance of yours? How can I come in touch with him?"

"I swore not to give him away, and I don't see how you can touch him except as you touch me. I can tell you all he could tell, so draw on me and count on me, and consider me the same as our friend 'Mr. A.'"

"Still—it's a difficult thing."

"I wouldn't look on it so." I am willing to act in the matter precisely as if I had been, and still am, 'Mr. A.'"

"Am I to gather from your words that you were one of that party of robbers, but you are afraid to incriminate yourself?"

"Mr. Detective, when wild flowers bloom in the woods, you can gather all you want, nobody to say you nay. I'm with you in this investigation, and to speak modest, I want that five hundred dollars you referred to and hope to earn it."

"Could you take me to that barn where you say the piano is stowed away?"

"We ought to discriminate in our talking; however, as to facts, otherwise: it was 'Mr. A' who said he knew where the piano is, but I can take you to the barn he described, and if it's there, as he thinks, you'll find it in a jiffy."

"But is it possible that you've known this all the time, and haven't informed the family where their piano may be found?" cried "Kellogg," reproachfully, and at the same time skeptically.

"Maybe it ain't possible," Sam agreed calmly. "But I ain't free to say as to that."

"From those words I understand you to insinuate that, after all, Woolcraft knows where the piano is; yet you were ridiculing the maid a few minutes ago for making the very same claim."

Sam Trouth shook his head. "You don't understand. You ain't him." I wouldn't try to find out everything at once, if I was you, or you'll hurt your head. I don't mean your head isn't as good as mine, but I was growed up in Windfair, and you don't know these people. I'll show you where 'Mr. A' says the piano is hiding for his head, and I can take you down river to the Torbitt saloon. That ought to be enough for a beginning. Then you'll know. I'm all up to you. I could do all this tonight or when you please. But I can't say more."

"Very well. Tomorrow I'll ask you to take me to Mr. A's barn, then down the river. We'll keep you longer—but one word: I am still to interview Mrs. Woolcraft. Have I your permission to see what you've told me, in speaking to her?"

"If you'll agree not to tell any of the others."

"I agree to that."

"Then you can repeat all I've said, but be careful, Mr. Detective, not to let her think I admitted myself to be 'Mr. A.' I never did admit that, did I?"

"Not in so many words."

"That's what I mean. I know I haven't admitted it in anything else. Well, so long then, until tomorrow."

And the gardener stepped lightly from the room.

"Kellogg" now faced what he regarded as the crisis of his life—the coming of Mrs. Woolcraft. Would she recognize him? If so, would she betray him? If not, would he be able to preserve that mechanical voice, that woodsy expression which he had thus far successfully employed to assist him in his assumed part? All at once, the importance of the Pettyberg mystery shrank to negligible proportions, and nothing in all the world mattered but this coming face-to-face alone in the library with the woman he loved.

CHAPTER XII.

THE door opened and Mrs. Woolcraft came in quietly and moved to the chair by the window, acknowledging his bow by a slight nod and a wan smile.

"Kellogg" was afraid to look her fairly in the face, convinced that if there were any of his features unchanged, they must be his eyes; and, as she remained passive and listless, his confidence grew bolder. He would studiously avoid her gaze, he would speak in that tone he had assumed as a young man, and, thus secure in his disguise, might enjoy to the bitter utmost the nearness of her presence. Not only on that night, but the next day, and every day for two weeks, if need be, he would dwell by her side, finding many excuses to join her with him in the mystery's investigation. And when the time grew short, and he dared not linger longer because of the certainty of discovery from the home office, he would vanish away, to become once more a homeless fugitive, unless—

Unless during these few days he could fasten the guilt of twenty years ago upon the real criminal. In that attempt, he felt sure she would aid him to her utmost.

Mrs. Woolcraft gazed idly out upon the summer night. It was evident that she had regarded the detective's plan of individual interview as a mere waste of time, and that she was there simply because of her father's wishes.

He was compelled to break the silence:

"I have gone over the situation pretty thoroly now, with every one of the household but you, madam, and I shall trouble you to answer a few questions."

"Of course—anything," she murmured abstractedly, her thoughts were elsewhere, and he ventured a long look at her, remembering her as a girl in this same apartment, hearing her fresh laughter, seeing the sunshine in her eyes.

"I understand from your father that you think your husband has knowledge of the robberies never so far disclosed to you or to any one."

"My father had no right to make that statement," was her cold rejoinder.

"He understood me that I am absolutely worthy of trust, and that if I do not know anything I can hardly hope to unravel the tangle. And I am going to urge you to trust me and to tell me exactly on what you suspect Mr. Woolcraft in the matter."

Her expression clouded. "Any fact in my possession I have told your father as to suspicions and surmises, I beg to be excused; you must form your own conclusions," Mrs. Kellogg answered. I might think about Mr. Woolcraft, I am unwilling to injure him by explaining to another what I have told a gentleman that may, after all, be without foundation."

"Let me speak in all frankness," he returned. "I am trying to connect the robberies of the past two years with that of twenty years ago. I want to show this: Either that Emory Barstow, having escaped from the penitentiary, and having for twenty years laid aside all of revenge, has come back to harass your father into his grave—or else, that the man who is the latter's son-in-law, and who did that deed so long ago, is not Emory Barstow. Do you understand?"

"Yes, but unfortunately you cannot show that the same man did all. If we could prove that the robber of the past two years is, for instance, Mr. Jay, is myself—it wouldn't prove that it was I who took the money from the secret drawer when Emory Barstow was accused of the crime."

"I believe I could undertake to prove it. If you will confess to the last four depredations, I can convict you of the first. And when I have done that the jury believe that the person who knew of the secret drawer and took money from it was the same person who knew of it and took from it formerly. Suppose you admit that it was you who had the piano carried off?"

"Well?"

"Any jury would be willing to believe that it was he who robbed himself of your clothes and took the violin."

"But you forget that both my father and Mr. Jay would testify that they recognized Emory Barstow on the first occasion."

"If they recognised him for certain, then it is Emory Barstow who has done the rest, and I shall prove it on him and have him hung down to the farthermost corners of the earth."

"No, oh, no!" she cried out, for the first time showing emotion in her voice. She half rose, with clasped hands. "You will do nothing of the kind, for I swear that Emory Barstow is innocent. He was ever so unjustly treated. I am as absolutely sure of his innocence as if I were conscious of it. He was in fact the money and struck my father to the floor. I tell you I know it. And now that he has lived down his past and succeeded in hiding himself from the cruel law, I say he shall not be driven out of his hiding-place like a poor wounded animal, defenseless as he is harmless!"

"It was proved on him—the jury took a very short time to form their verdict—the whole community sided with the jury," he returned harshly.

"But I say he was innocent."

"No, you did not know he was innocent," he said, more harshly than before. "You have persuaded yourself since, and now you imagine you never doubted. But you doubted at that time. Would you have married him if you had not doubted? Would you have married Woolcraft if you still loved the prisoner? And you say you still loved him if you had believed in him? You did not believe in him—you thought him a thief, and I shall be guided by your first impression, for first impressions are the most trustworthy. I shall regard him as a thief. I shall prove him the same revengeful thief who has been operating in this house during the past two years. And when I have proved it, the case will be closed. You speak of not driving him out of his hiding-place. What right has he to hide? No, let him be punished, let him be shut up for the

To Ledger Volunteers:

During our trouble with Mexico you volunteered to enlist with me; but volunteers were not called for by our War Department at that time.

We may expect now that our country will need us and accept our offer to enlist. Hold yourselves ready to help make up our regiment. You may hear from me any day.

W. D. Boyce

rest of his life, let him die in prison—who cares? You will say you were but a child at the time of the trial, that he was only a boy. So much the worse for him. So much the clearer your vision. At seventeen a girl's eyes are clear and can see into a man's soul. You looked in, his soul and read its blackness. If I needed any evidence of Emory Barstow's worthlessness, I'd find it in the ease with which you flung him aside for a man you've never loved. Of course, Mr. Pettyberg thinks him a wretch because his money was gone—somebody took it, somebody knocked him down—anybody might have done it, and Mr. Pettyberg would have imagined he looked like Barstow. Of course, in the darkness of his room, Woolcraft thought the burglar looked like Barstow, because Barstow was his rival. This evidence would weigh nothing with me. But when his promised wife scorned him the moment he got into trouble, and turned a man she never pretended to care for—well, that's what we may call convincing evidence."

"Stop!" had of course been meant to say none of these things. Before each sentence was finished, he tried to stop speaking, but each sentence would burst from his tortured heart. He could not check the words, the fierce accusations, the terrible taunts. His voice grew hoarser and hoarser, as he rushed on, until at last the phrases were inarticulate. After she had ceased, his breast was heaving, his breath sounded raspingly in his throat, and he stood glaring at her wretchedly, wildly.

At his first denunciation she had started up in fierce anger, but the words not words to be quelled or swept aside, and before he had finished, not he, but her own heart had rendered her. Amazed, conscience-stricken, bewildered by she knew not what emotions, and dazed because caught at not one of them, she leaned heavily upon the back of her chair as if unable either to stand alone or to command her pose.

Who was this man who had probed her to the heart? How could a stranger, a professional detective, have bare her weakness with so much passionate grief? Was it merely an assumed part, an official display of pretended emotion?

"You knew him!" was all she said.

He did not answer.

She held out her hands to him appealingly. "And you will prove his innocence!" she cried, with sudden strength. "You will—you will!"

He stared into her face and found not the slightest sign of pride.

The forgetfulness of his anguish had swept by as swiftly as it had descended upon him. "What have I said? I—I pray!" he exclaimed. "How can you pardon me?"

"Pardon you? What does that matter? You will prove him innocent! I know you will!" And coming to him she grasped his arm with both hands, looking pleadingly into his burning eyes.

He trembled as with a sudden chill and drew away, for with that touch upon his arm, his self-control was snatching from him. He mumbled, "Will you help me?"

She wrung her hands. "Oh, you don't understand me! Yes, you do—I mean, you both do and do not! Of course I will help. There is nothing I'd not do of all that I can do!"

"Thank you," said "Kellogg," who now had himself under better control. "After my inexcusable outburst, you treat me with a consideration I have no right to ask, and I appreciate it deeply: Madam, I shall ask a very unusual thing of you—I dare say you'll reject the plan with none of the mercy you have shown so far."

"Mr. Kellogg," she interrupted, "please understand that I regard you as an instrument that fardy justice has at last sent my way. I do not care what you say.

"You can't offend me so long as you are trying to clear Emory Barstow of the crime he never committed."

"Very well. At a quarter past ten I shall hide in the grapevines at the back of your summerhouse in the garden. There I expect to hear something of value. Will you hide there with me, and act as a corroborating witness? If the evidence gathered is of value, it shouldn't rest solely upon my testimony."

"But what can you expect to hear or see at such an hour in a garden?"

"I do not know what to expect. In truth, it may very well be that I shall hear nothing. But I am warned that it will be worth while to hide as I said. It is, I know, asking a great deal that you should consent to spend with a stranger in a situation so peculiar—"

"Mr. Kellogg," she interrupted swiftly, "I cannot explain it, but there is something about you that forces my complete trust. There is something in your eyes that tells me you are honest, and more to me you might not ask of your own sister. It is very strange, but it seems to me you could not deceive me, that could drive me from you in anger. I have not the remotest idea why you want me to hide with you, but I am convinced that I realize, as you say, that it is a very 'peculiar situation' and that if strangers found us so, it would be a situation hard to explain. And yet, of course, I will go with you, and of course I will hide there as you desire. You have some motive is to exonerate Emory Barstow, and make it possible for him to live as a free man once more. Is that the fact?"

"That is my object, precisely, solely."

"Yes, I will go with you." She glanced at the clock. "And it is almost time now."

"You had better go first," he said. "Let them see you retire for the night and go up to your room—then slip down and be careful in the garden not to let your dress flash in the moonlight. The moon will soon set now; but you might wear a dark cloak of some sort. I'll join you in a few minutes."

CHAPTER XIII.

KELLOGG" waited till the last sound of Mrs. Woolcraft's voice had died away, then approached the hall door cautiously and left the library. He felt almost exhausted by the long strain. The various interviews with the members of the household had been very trying, but the anticipation of the hour to meet with Mrs. Woolcraft, and finally the ordeal of that meeting, with its passion and its agonies, had proved almost too much for him.

Making as little noise as possible he passed thru the front door out upon the porch and thence to the gravel path. Since his escape from prison he had lived as much as possible in the open air and now the balmy summer breeze revived him, bringing back the power to think consecutively. He was sure that what he was not followed, he took the direction of the garden and, by devious paths, sought the summerhouse.

As he sauntered, apparently without aim, thru the night, he tried to find an explanation for the mysterious hour to be enacted. The maid had promised to bring Miss Jetty Edge and Woolcraft together in the summerhouse for his especial benefit. By what power or influence was the maid able to do this? Was she a tool of the principals to play the part? And if the meeting took place, might it not be that both Miss Edge and Woolcraft, at least one of them, would be aware of the fact that there was a listener—a future witness? And, however could he be said? Again—was it not more likely that the maid had no power over the two, and knew nothing, and meant to bring them there that she would be unable to do so? In that case, might there not be some design against the detective?

"Kellogg" was absolutely sure of only one thing—but whether or not the listening might be suspected, no one would think of Mrs. Woolcraft as hiding in the grapevines.

He had found his retreat but a few minutes before Mrs. Woolcraft joined him with a whispered, "Here I am." His joy at her coming was so intense as to be inexpressible. They waited in silence, so close that her dress brushed his knee. What did she expect to happen? Of what was she thinking? He had forgotten all about Miss Edge and Woolcraft except just so far as to remember that he must make no noise. His soul was filled with the woman at his side, and the thought of the awful, the happenings of terrible years, they should stand thus in the same garden as if they had never been parted, was almost overwhelming to his abnormally sensitive nature.

If he could have told her—"I am Emory Barstow!" If he could have held her hand in his, or gathered her to his breast in spite of all the world—

But no, he must go away when his work was done, like a shadow fleeing to his world of darkness, unless he could prove the whole truth.

He longed to tell her something of himself, and longed still more to hear her breathe forth confidences of whatever nature. But what could he say to her? What could he have said even had there had been no need for silence and caution? Already he had gained that for which he had risked his liberty, for in the remoteness of his different reality he had learned to hope for nothing more than his present experience. But he was not content; he could never be content until he had given him as he was, even if the knowledge be the means of returning him to prison walls. He had believed that would satisfy him, this nearness, this sweet association, the touch of her garment, the occasional breath of her lips upon his bowed head, but now it seemed to him that if this were to be all, it had been better if he had died in his loneliness.

Perhaps five minutes passed after the coming of Mrs. Woolcraft before cautious footsteps were heard at the entrance of the summerhouse. One or more stepped upon the bare floor and moved hither and thither, and there was the rustling as of somebody taking a seat.

"Thank you, Miss Edge," spoke the voice of the housemaid.

Miss Edge's voice was then heard, sparkling with scornful accents: "I suppose I should say that you are welcome, Zenia, but I can't. The fact is, I am terribly, terribly angry. I hate staying all alone here in the garden when goodness knows what may happen."

"But I'll be near—not in hearing, that is, if you and Mr. Woolcraft talk together, but where I can hear if you should cry for help. Of course, if the real robber comes you might do that—"

"Don't mention the real robber again, or I shall not stay here another minute," Miss Edge exclaimed. "I am frightened to death as it is."

"I'm scared, too, of course I am," murmured the maid, but her tones were not frightened. "But you know I'm not what he thinks in any other way?"

"Yes, that's all true enough. Run along, then, Zenia, and—and for goodness' sake keep an eye out for strangers and stay in the garden afterwards."

The maid darted away.

Jetty Edge breathed rapidly and moved restlessly on the bench. As if to weather of the nasal silence, "Kellogg" reached toward Mrs. Woolcraft and touched her hand, whereupon it lost him a matter of course, with childlike trustfulness, and his heart bounded. His senses reveled, intensified, breathlessly excited, unable to understand the maid's scheme to which Miss Edge had lent herself with apparent reluctance.

After about ten minutes of dead silence broken only by the soft breathing and nervous movements of the lady in the summerhouse, again footsteps sounded upon the path, and Zenia came running. Scarcely were they audible before the runner—a man—had leaped thru the door of the summerhouse, crying excitedly, "Hold up your hands!"

Miss Edge gave a terrified little scream and exclaimed, "Mr. Woolcraft!"

"Good Heavens!" came the voice of Woolcraft. "Is that you, Jetty? I mean —Miss Edge!" He stood where her cry had halted him.

She answered faintly, "Yes. You have found me out at last, Woolcraft."

Then he came to her and sank beside her upon the bench, stammering, "But what does all this mean? Why are you here?—And did you see anybody run in this direction?"

"Nobody has come into the garden," she faltered.

"Yes, somebody must have slipped past you," he protested.

"Nobody else," she cried passionately, "nobody, nobody! Now you must admit what you have all the time suspected, that I am a wicked, wicked girl. It will be your duty to tell the whole town." She had grown hysterical.

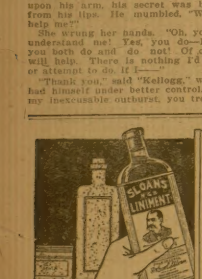
He spoke impatiently, rapidly. "What are you talking about? You are excited about something—listen to me! A few minutes ago Zenia—Kellogg's cautiously—told me she had discovered the thief at last—a woman, in her bedroom, running off among the shadows. Afterwards, Zenia had made a movement in her bed, and the woman ran out—came to this summerhouse, and was detected from her window while dressing—then crept to my room, that I might surprise the thief, and get as quickly as possible, but it seems I was not on time. And yet, if you were out here, it seems impossible you should not have seen the woman."

"But doesn't it amaze you that I should be here?" Miss Edge demanded, with strange fierceness.

"Of course it does; it isn't at all safe. I should say, in view of what the maid has just told me. You oughtn't to be here unprotected, for whoever it is that breaks into the house must be a desperate character, man or woman."

"But I tell you I have been sitting here for a quarter of an hour," she exclaimed passionately. "Zenia tells you the robber ran in here. Now what do you think?" She started up from the bench in a sort of fury. "I ask you what do you think?"

"If you were asleep—Jetty, I do not



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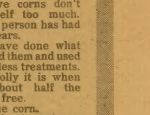

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understand you," answered Mr. Woolcraft.

"But I wasn't asleep. If any woman came here from the house, I am that woman. Now you have the truth—I am the woman that came from Zenia's room."

"Jetty, in the name of Heaven, what are you driving at?"

"It's simple enough. All the time you have believed me implicated in the robberies—and now you have the proof."

He laughed. "I begin to see daylight," he murmured. "You and Zenia have fixed up this little plot to force me to show my hand. It is rather clever."

His coolness increased her agitation. "All the time you have suspected me—"

"Nonsense! I should as soon have thought of suspecting myself. Sit down, Jetty, and let's reason about it."

"But you've shown your hatred and contempt for me—you've never taken any pains to hide it. You tried to drive me from the house—you asked my cousin to send me away. Always you believed me a thief, and tonight I meant to force you to confess your suspicion."

"I've had no such suspicion. How could I? We don't suspect the angels, Jetty. All you've accomplished by to-night's prank is to force me to tell you that I consider you as pure and sweet and good as an angel."

There was a short silence; then she said in altered tones: "But why have you treated me so roughly? Why did you try to banish me?"

"Because——" He hesitated, then went on with quivering intensity—— "Because I love you. I love you with all the passion of my heart—now."

"Don't, don't!" she interrupted, with a sob.

"Ah—but you would have it, and now you shall have it all! It has been a terrible struggle to keep from showing you that I worship the ground you tread upon. My only resource was to pretend dislike. I wanted you to go away for your sake and for mine. As you know too well, I am not free. But I adore you, Jetty. I have seen you grow up so near me, always good, always charming, always as beautiful as the dawn with that golden hair, those sparkling blue eyes, that little mouth like perfumed rose-leaves!"

"I must go back to the house," she stammered. "Stay here—don't follow me. If I had known——"

"And you love me," he burst forth hoarsely. "I know it, I have seen it—that has made it the more necessary for me to appear hard and cold. But like a coward I have clung to the semblance of marriage with my wife because my business interests are all entangled with her father's. Jetty—as soon as possible our partnership shall be dissolved, and after that, a divorce; and then—you will go with me, I know. Isn't it true?"

"I can't discuss it with you, I won't hear a word—not now," she sobbed. "I can't forget for one minutes the years of agony I've endured because you made me believe you felt me guilty of those disgraceful acts."

"I love you—I have loved you for years. I've always known you as innocent as the light. As to those low thieveries, Emory Barstow was and is at the bottom of them all."

"Take your arm from around my waist, Mr. Woolcraft," she panted. "No, no! It must not be—not yet. Mrs. Woolcraft is my friend, and you cannot be my lover, for you are her husband. And—and I know you are clever enough about Emory Barstow. I knew him in my childhood—as fine and upright a young man as ever lived, or so I thought."

"You thought as a child," he returned impatiently. "Fortunately I have kept my senses. Without letting any one in this town know, I have had detectives on his path for two years—I was the first of the recent robberies. We've found his last hiding-place, down at Mapinui in Mexico. From the last report obtainable, he had left for the States, and was headed in this direction. He has hidden away in holes and caves and city garrets in order to let time change him beyond recognition. He wears long black whiskers that almost cover up his face to the eyes. His voice is metallic, his eyes are shifty. I'm told we wouldn't know him if we should meet him in our drawing-room. But the detectives know him well enough, and will soon land him back in the penitentiary. One of them is in town now; the other is watching from the other end of the line. I tell you all this to show you that I have not a fancy that I should suspect you."

There were sounds of kissing, nor did Jetty make any protest now. They left the summerhouse together and the darkness swallowed them up.

After they were gone, Mrs. Woolcraft stood as motionless as a statue until "Kellogg" in a matter-of-fact voice broke the silence.

"This is all we have to do, tonight, madam. I'll report to the chief with me tomorrow afternoon on a short expedition?"

At first she could not answer. When she did so, her effort to control her emotions was pitifully evident. "An expedition?"

"Just so; an expedition relating to the mystery, of course. And, indirectly, it involves the innocence or guilt of Emory Barstow."

She spoke with sudden eagerness: "Have you learned something to his advantage?"

"I think so. Will you go with me to see—?"

"Yes—tomorrow afternoon—or at any time—to any place. Now, if this is all—good night." Suddenly she cried: I am in the house, for I—for I am terribly tired, yet I hardly know why."

He watched her as she went alone, wondering how she had been affected by what they had overheard. He recalled with a smile how he had once intended him that the interview between Miss Edge and Woolcraft would show them to be in collusion. He had been too keen-eyed enough to penetrate Woolcraft's disguise or stimulated hatred for Jetty Edge, but he was not correctly read his motives, and she had assuredly wronged Mr. Peter Woolcraft by coming to him proving that Woolcraft was a criminal, it had grown clear that Woolcraft either from conscience or policy had spent upon the recapture and prolonged punishment of Emory Barstow.

That reflection swiftly banished the smile from "Kellogg's" face. Already a detective was in Windfair watching for him—another was guarding the main road of escape! One false move, and he would again be in the toils. Mrs. Woolcraft had trusted him in a manner to put his heart to the depths; but even should that trust continue after learning his identity, it could not be secure for his liberty. It was even possible that her love for him after all that had happened was as strong as ever—but it could not be so strong as the bolts and bars of the penitentiary.

This mysterious story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

His Method.

A fond mother took her 5-year-old daughter to a photographer. The little one could not be made to sit still. The photographer was as kind and suave as he could be, called the child all the sweet and endearing names he could think of, and used every persuasive device to make the little wriggler keep still. Finally, he turned to the despairing mother and said:

"Madam, if you will leave your darling alone with me for a few minutes, I think I can succeed in taking her lovely face to perfection."

The mother withdrew for a short time. Soon the photographer summoned her back and declared that he had a highly satisfactory negative.

When they reached home the mother asked:

"Darling, what did that nice gentleman say to you when I left you alone with him?"

"Well, he said," lisped the child, "if you don't sit still, you ugly monkey, I'll shake the life out of you!" So I sat very still, mamma."

* * *

Learning to Fight.

"I'll say this much for Mrs. Dibble."

"Well?"

"She used to be a timid little creature, but she has acquired a great deal of self-reliance since she joined the housewives' boycott."

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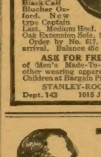

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Or, The Stolen Birthright

By Marquis James

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CHAPTER XVI.

SOME moments passed. Sturgis was about to stir from his place by the door when he again caught the sound of the approaching feet of Eloise Wade. She came straight to the folding doors and cautiously slid one section open. The detective drew back instinctively.

"Mr. Sturgis!" whispered Eloise.

"I am here," came the detective's voice from a dark recess.

"Come—gently now. He is gone—retired to his room. I made sure of that."

A slender white hand appeared thru the doorway. Sturgis took it, and was led into the back parlor, which was dimly lighted by a single low-burning lamp on a stand in one corner.

"I hope you will be good enough to explain to me the meaning of all this," Sturgis began, pressing the interrogation in a perplexed manner when the two faced each other. "I confess I have been highly nervous—and mystified."

"You heard what was said between us?"

"Part of it. I could not escape it. I would have, gladly, had it been possible."

"You caught the trend of our remarks, then?" Eloise regarded him narrowly as she spoke.

The fire in love, her passion had cooled since her first outbreak, and she was no longer the fool her brother thought her to be.

"I cannot say I did—precisely," Sturgis discounted. "As I said, I was highly nervous, and my mind was occupied with other matters, principally with the concern of my own safety."

"I am glad you did not," replied the woman, easier. "Not that anything compromising, on analysis, passed between us. But one so often takes the wrong construction on things others say. And particularly in a case like yours that you ask me to explain. Gladly, but at a more propitious time. Just now, let me apologize, oh, twenty thousand times, yes."

She bent her face close to his ear as she spoke. Sturgis felt her warm breath upon his cheek. Her accent—it was bewitching. The necromancer!

"But the gentleman with whom you spoke was your brother, wasn't he?" Sturgis asked, stepping back out of the danger zone.

"Yes."

"Then, why these actions? What has he or I or both of us to fear from our meeting" Did you not say this morning that I should meet your brother?"

"Yes, but unlooked-for things have intervened since then. But all that will be made clear when I am able to explain everything to you. Meanwhile, just trust me."

"But was I really in danger?" persisted Sturgis, with no ears for her plea.

"You were—but of that when I ex——"

"Then why did you jeopardize your own safety, as you undoubtedly did, to protect me—almost a stranger?"

"Did you not jeopardize your life to protect me this morning?" countered Eloise.

For a moment she had the upper hand in the give and take colloquy.

"And for no other reason, then, than my part in the little episode of this morning, you intervened as you did for me tonight?" Sturgis questioned, with a show of confusion.

"There might have been another reason." She dropped her eyes coyly as she spoke.

"What, pray?"

"For what other reason could a woman shield a man—what reason other than gratitude?"

"I asked the question first."

"Because she loved him!"

The starkness of the statement caught Sturgis by surprise. He was beginning to detect admission that Eloise's action might have been actuated by fear of Sturgis. Thus ended the dire mystic climax went tumbling like a house of cards. In his astonishment he extended his arms involuntarily forward. Eloise mistook it for something else—an awkward attempt at a caress. She stepped back hastily.

"Not now," she said shyly. "Ah! I see you are not as dumb as you have pretended, no?"

"Very well," said Sturgis, not undeceiving her. "I will call, then, tomorrow, if it is convenient."

He questioned her with his eyes.

"Tomorrow, then. In the evening at seven, when it is cool. Will you say yes? Come for dinner. I shall be alone, and I promise you there will be none of the mysterious interruptions there was tonight. And if you are a good boy I shall explain everything—everything."

"Divulge as much or as little as you wish. I leave it with you. Only remember, a mystery often loses its quality of romantic interest when the solving."

"You speak of romance—so?" she chided. "The word comes easily to your tongue."

"Only when the heart gives the tongue license to utter it," replied Sturgis in the same accentuated vein.

A smile which dented her deep-set dimples was Eloise's only answer to this bonmot. She turned to lead the way and Sturgis to follow. They proceeded into the entry, pausing in the front doorway.

"You may call me Lou," she said, whispered sweetly, "where you are from or what brings you to Acadia. You're a Northerner, I know by your speech. Is trays you."

"Business," replied Sturgis, offhandedly. "It is my latest consideration, thanks to the legacy of a deceased and wealthy uncle who was something of a banker on Wall street, New York."

"His majesty, the Idle Rich," chaffed Eloise. "But tell me, just to satisfy a woman's whim, are you a detective?"

The interrogation was a bolt from the blue. The moon was behind a cloud, or even Louis's keen eyes would have revealed the astonishment mirrored on Sturgis' face.

"The plot thickens, indeed!" exploded Sturgis, after a pause, in a tone so loud that Eloise raised a finger to her lips for silence.

"Forgive me then," she smiled, convinced. She extended her hand. "You shall hear it all tomorrow night, sweet."

"I am dying to learn the secret," confessed Sturgis, giving the hand he held just the slightest pressure and, passing out onto the gallery, he paused on the steps, smiled over his shoulder at the gorgeous picture of womanhood framed in the doorway and repeated softly:

"Tomorrow, at seven."

Eloise watched the retreating figure until it was lost to sight down the shell walk. Then with a lover's sigh, she turned away and repaired to her sleeping-room.

CHAPTER XVII.

THREE hours later the form of a man, indistinct in the pallid, unreal light of the moon, could be discerned on the lawn of Wade Hall and made toward the great gate, in the direction Eloise Wade had fondly watched Sturgis disappear. In his arms he bore a bulky burden. He made headway as rapidly as the weight of his burden and exigencies of circumstances would allow. He proceeded at a crouching, hurried walk along the soundless turf, shunning the shell walk, which lay bleached and specter-like, bisecting the dark acreage of close-cropped bermuda.

Stealthily the night prowler approached the stately iron gate, guarded by the twin oaks which marked the limits of the beautiful grounds of the Wade estate. Breathing heavily from his exertions, and with his face streaked by perspiration, he paused beside the gate, which, never locked, now stood halfway open. Apprehensively he glanced back at the old mansion, and extended his circumspective examination over the lawn.

The coast was clear. He had escaped with his prize undetected. A ticklish enterprise had been carried out successfully. With a breath of relief, a——smile of satisfaction on his lips, and one reassuring, backward glance at the house, he bore his burden thru the gate into the public highway.

In the road he stopped, and after a glance either direction released the load from his arms. Magic-like, a girl stood beside him! The second abduction of Patrice Wade had been accomplished.

"Safe?" She breathed the question plaintively.

"Yes, my little heroine." Sturgis' heart was pounding as he replied. He mopped his perspiring face with a handkerchief.

"Take me to my father," the girl said pleadingly.

"Come, I have a horse tied by the roadside up a little way. I guess we can ride double, comfortably. You see, I had not expected to encounter you at Wade Hall."

Patrice, overcome with gratitude that could find no suitable expression, walked in silence by the side of Camden Sturgis for a space.

"My father—then you have found and rescued him, too?" She put the question eagerly and with a little gasp.

"You will see him presently," evaded the detective. "Do not worry. Ah, there is my good mount right where I left him. I feared some late traveler might discover him there, and fancying him deserted, lead him away."

Patrice was perhaps more at home on horseback than Sturgis himself. In all ways but the boast that she could ride anything on the place.

In a moment she was on the horse's back, and Sturgis, at the saddle, and the steed, with its burden was galloping toward Acadia. Sturgis intended to catch the ten-o'clock morning train to New Orleans.

He had carried out his deliverance of Patrice in accordance with a plan he had begun to formulate in his mind the moment he learned of Eloise's inhuman conversation of Thibidoux and his sister that the girl was imprisoned in the house. Following his remarkable adieux to Eloise, Sturgis had hitched his horse in the road a safe distance away, and entered the house. He began a stealthy reconnoissance of the premises.

The problem of locating the room in the great pile where Patrice was imprisoned solved itself with unusual ease.

On his first tour of the outside of the house Sturgis' attention was attracted to a light in a lone garret window. Closer inspection revealed that iron bars latticed that window. Taking up his station behind a tree he instituted a patient espionage of the room for an hour, rewarded with a glance of a small white face pressed against the bars. It was Patrice.

Sturgis already had made careful note of the downstairs arrangement of the house. It was one of his professional accomplishments to be a quick and accurate judge of the size and disposition of rooms in a house. A good detective can appraise the exterior of a place, and unless for some reason it prefers to keep its interior construction, can detail the arrangement of the inside almost as accurately as if he had spent a day in it with a yardstick. Detectives have a simple method of arriving at these conclusions. Houses fall easily into conventional types. Five or six of which include every dwelling from a cottage to a mansion. Their exteriors index them. A few hours' study over an architect's plats and any one should be able to tell the interior arrangements of a house after a glance at the outside.

The upstairs arrangement of houses of the period and type of the Wade mansion is fairly uniform. Probably the same. Thus applying his formula, Sturgis had no reason not to believe that from the top of the herald stairs, a wide hallway extended the length of the sec-

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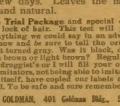

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ond story of the house, sleeping-rooms opening into it on either side. Another flight of stairs, concealed by a door, should be in the rear. This flight would be for the use of servants, principally.

By rights, Sturgis reasoned it should continue to the third or attic story. This floor could be divided into rooms, necessarily low-ceilinged, for emergency purposes, or could be left an unpartitioned, cobwebby sanctuary for old trunks, broken furniture and the musty, dusty discarded household accumulations of years. Or again, only one or two garret-rooms might be finished off, and the remainder left bare as a sort of household graveyard.

The Wade Hall attic was divided into rooms, or at any rate there was one room finished off in it, Sturgis was certain, since Patrice's light showed through only the single window. Sturgis figured out in minute detail the route he must take, the space he must traverse before the doors he would have to open to reach the room in which the girl was imprisoned. That the door to the room could be locked, he could be assured, but since the safest of all locks is a bolt which can readily be negotiated from the inner side once having reached the door his task might be simple.

Waiting until all lights, save the one behind the barred window, had been extinguished, Sturgis entered the house thru the drawing-room window which he had unlocked and opened beforehand for just that purpose. Without untoward incident he crossed from the lower floor, mounted the stairs, stole along the hallway past the sleeping-rooms of Thibidoux and his sister, and ascended to the attic.

Chinks of light, streaming thru the crevices, outlined the door and designated the room in which the girl was held a prisoner and the sound of low, dry-eyed sobs which came from within told that its occupant had no eyes for sleep. Sturgis crept up to the door and explored about with his hands. As he had calculated it was bolted from the outside. Silently he drew back the bolt, the barrier between Patrice and freedom.

How to make his presence known without startling the girl and running great risk of discovery and total upset of plans by her rousing the house with an outcry presented a delicate situation. Sturgis did not hesitate long, however. Drawing his revolver, and making ready to shoot himself out if matters came to that pass, he threw the door open suddenly and briskly stepped beyond the threshold.

"Silence! It's Sturgis, your friend!" He uttered the words in a crisp half-whisper.

The moaning form, which lay fully clothed across the small bed which occupied a far corner of the room, stirred. The girl propped her head up on one hand and gazed, wide-eyed and speechless, at the detective in the doorway.

"Mr. Sturgis? Am I having visions?" Her tone belied the evidence her eyes presented.

Sturgis approached the bed quickly. "No, indeed," he assured, laying one hand upon her shoulder. "Don't speak loud. I have come to take you away from here."

The girl stood up, still regarding her visitor with blinking, dumfounded eyes. She touched his arms with her fingertips, as if making sure the form that appeared before her was real and not an apparition.

"Sh! Not a word. No questions now," cautioned Sturgis. "Quick! Don't stop to take a thing. Let us leave."

Taking the girl by the hand he led her safely on the perilous journey out of the house. Her strength zapped by the sleepless nights and weary days of confinement, Patrice's nerves gave way when the two emerged from the parlor window and Sturgis was obliged to carry her across the lawn.

Once on horseback, and certain that her escape had been achieved, Patrice's mind cleared and her strength returned with amazing rapidity. The cool, caressing breeze blew to and sending her golden hair flying on the breeze behind her, proved a wonderful elixir to her tired nerves. Hope, the most easily acquired of all the virtues, rekindled in her breast.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HENRI THIBIDOUX awoke with a start. "Jove!" he exclaimed, glancing at the small ivory clock on the mantel. "I've overslept myself, by Gad! Not a moment to be lost if I make that two-ten train.

He sat up on the side of his bed and with the inefficient haste of a drowsy man pulled on his shoes and commenced to lace them.

On leaving his sister, Henri had not intended to retire. He went to his room as a matter of habit, merely to bathe and removing his shoes and collar, he had thrown himself across his bed, with the intent of reviewing in his mind the development of his latest designs until Eloise should be asleep. Then he was to slip from the house, and, mounting his favorite saddle horse, ride to Acadia and board the early train south, to return forthwith accompanied by Eloise.

A sip of wine containing one of the Doctor's deadly potions would eliminate Eloise and her dangerous love affair. Before neighborhood suspicion over the death of Eloise could be galvanized into action, end could be made to the Colonel in New Orleans. Then, the estate reverting to Patrice, it could be seized, since the girl would still be in their power.

Aside from real estate, there was personal property worth a good million, which could be transported abroad when the girl should be carried off and secreted in Paris. A half-million in ready-to-city sums and well worth exile from the United States, as Thibidoux reasoned it. Binot had failed, and could lead the way to some forgotten refugee land where no questions are asked of newcomers.

It was not yet too late. His hasty toilet finished, Thibidoux seized a traveling bag he kept packed and prepared, automatically against such emergencies, and slipped silently out into the hall. He tiptoed past Eloise's door and began to ascend the front stairs.

At the first landing his foot encountered a small object on the floor. In the dark he stooped, and only by a timely clutch at the banister prevented his pitching headlong. His equilibrium restored just in time, he leaned against the rail, not venturing to move.

He listened intently, fearing the noise might have awakened Eloise, who was a light sleeper, and whose room was just at the head of the stairway. Satisfied after a moment that his misstep had not been attended by this untoward consequences, sheer curiosity prompted him to stoop and examine the misplaced object on the stairs which had given him such a narrow escape.

He picked it up, and in the darkness endeavored to determine what it was by feeling it with his hands. This was not difficult. It was a woman's slipper.

"Strange," he mused, "how came it there?"

And again:

"Whose is it?"

As Thibidoux fingered the slipper the moon, escaping from behind a cloud, sent a spectral radiance to bathe the slatted blinds which covered the diamond-shaped window that relieved the wall at the first landing. Thibidoux, as he turned, held the slipper up to the window for closer inspection. It was a shoddy little low-heeled affair, a fact which at once lent color to the discovery.

Eloise, Henri knew, wore nothing but the high French heels, even about the house. Flat heels, she always contended, destroyed the grace of a woman's walk. The shoe was not hers, then. A pretty mystery, indeed!

A trifle more than curious, Henri turned to ascend the stairs, willing to sacrifice a few of his precious moments for a more satisfying examination of the abandoned shoe under the light of his reading lamp.

Just then his glance chanced toward the floor. Where the light which streamed thru the window, outlining a diamond-shaped space on the carpet, there appeared a dark, formless blot.

A blood spot! Quickly Henri stooped to verify his swift suspicion. Gingerly he lent his finger-tips to the sinister shadow at his feet.

It was not a blot on the carpet, but a small, softish object. Thibidoux picked it up. A rose—and nothing more. He smiled, ashamed of his hasty apprehensions, and, with the slipper in one hand and the flower in the other, quickly ascended the stairs and entered his room.

He examined the slipper first. His casual concern became genuine alarm on finding a thin lining of blood on the shabby little shoe his eyes caught these wear-dimmed initials: "P. W. W."

The slipper belonged to Patrice.

And the rose? Henri remembered his sister had worn a flower precisely like it in her hair that night.

Throwing caution to the winds, Thibidoux rushed from his room, stumbled his way along the hall, and groped up the pitch-dark shaft of steps which led to the attic. Lighting a match, he started toward the door of the room in which Patrice had been confined. The door was open! The girl was gone!

The mystery of the slipper, lost in her hasty escape, and of the blood? But of a from Eloise's hair? Thibidoux made a feverish examination of the premises. No visible clew to the identity of Patrice's mysterious accomplice had been left behind. That a second person had aided her in the escape was evident. The barred bar, which held fast the door, could have been removed only from the outside.

The episodes of the previous evening

Nuxated Iron to Make New Age of Beautiful Women and Vigorous Iron Men

Say Physicians—Quickly Puts Roses Into the Cheeks of Women and Most Astonishing Youthful Vitality Into the Veins of Men—It Often Increases the Strength and Endurance of Delicate, Nervous "Run-Down" Folks 100 Per Cent. in Two Weeks' Time.

Opinion of Dr. Schuyler C. Jaques, Visiting Surgeon of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, New York City

NEW YORK, N. Y.—Since the remarkable discovery of organic iron, Nuxated Iron or "Fer Nuxate," as the French call it, has taken the country by storm. It is conservatively estimated that over three million people annually are taking it in this country alone. Most astonishing results are reported from its use by both physicians and laymen. So much so that doctors predict that we shall soon make a new age of far more beautiful, rosy-cheeked women and vigorous iron men.

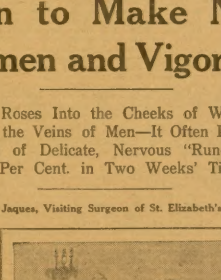
Dr. Ferdinand King, a New York Physician and Medical Author, when interviewed on this subject, said: "There can be no vigorous iron men without iron. Iron is the principal element in means iron deficiency. The skin of anemic people is pale as is also the flesh flabby. The muscles lack tone; the brain fags and the nerves whine and often they become weak, nervous, irritable, despondent and melancholy. When the iron goes from the blood of women, the roses go from their cheeks.

"In the average foods of America, the starches, sugars, table syrups, candies, polished rice, white bread, soda crackers, biscuits, macaroni, spaghetti, tapioca, sago, farina, degerminated cornmeal, the iron has been killed. Refining processes have removed the iron of Mother Earth. From these impoverished foods, and silly methods of home cookery, by throwing down the waste gases, water in which our vegetables are cooked, are responsible for another grave iron loss.

"Therefore, if you wish to preserve your youthful vim, vigor and vitality to old age, you must supply the iron deficiency in your food by using some form of organic iron, just as you would use salt, when your food has not enough salt."

Dr. B. Sauer, a Boston physician who has studied with the medical staff in great European medical institutions, said: "As I have on numerous occasions before, organic iron is the greatest of all strength builders. I have frequently seen Nuxated Iron when they feel weak or rundown, instead of dosing themselves with habit forming drugs, nerve tonics or alcoholic beverages I am convinced that in this way they would soon find themselves preventing it becoming organic in thousands of cases and thereby save many thousands might be saved who now die every year from pneumonia, grippe, kidney, liver, heart trouble and other dangerous maladies. The real and true cause which started their downward career was more nor less than a weakened condition brought on by a lack of iron in the blood.

"Not long ago a man came to me who was nearly half a century old and asked me to give him a temporary examination for life insurance. I was astonished to find he had the blood pressure of a boy of twenty and as full of vigor, vim and vitality as a young man. In fact, a young man he really was, notwithstanding his age, for secret of it was taking iron—Nuxated Iron had filled him with renewed life. At 70 he was in bad health; at 40 he was careworn and nearly all in. Now at 50 after taking Nuxated Iron, a miracle of vitality and his face beaming with the buoyancy of youth. Iron is absolutely necessary to enable your blood to change food into living tissue. Without it, no matter how much or what you eat, your food merely passes through you without doing you any good. You don't get the strength out of it, and as a consequence you become weak, pale and sickly looking, just like a plant trying to grow in a soil deficient in iron. If you are not strong or well, you owe it to yourself to make the following test: See how long you can work or how far you can walk without becoming tired. Next take two five-grain tablets of ordinary Nuxated Iron three times per day after meals for two weeks. Then test your strength again and see how much you have gained. I have seen dozens of nervous, run-down people who were all the time tired, who lacked their strength and endurance and entirely rid themselves of all symptoms of dyspepsia, liver and other troubles in from ten to fourteen days' time simply by taking iron in the proper form. And this, after they had in some cases been doctoring for months without obtaining any benefit. But don't take the old forms of reduced iron, iron acetate, or tincture of iron simply to save a few cents. The iron dedoesn't make the blood red. It is the coloring matter in the blood of her children is, alas! not that kind of iron. You must take iron in a form that can be easily absorbed and assimilated to do you any good, otherwise it may prove worse than useless. Many an athlete and prizefighter has won the day simply because he knew the secret of great strength and endurance and filled his blood with iron before the battle. Many a woman and many another has gone down in ignominious defeat simply for the lack of iron."



Dr. Schuyler C. Jaques, Visiting Surgeon of St. Elizabeth's Hospital, New York City, said: "I have never before given out any medical information or advice for publication as I ordinarily do not believe in it. But in the case of Nuxated Iron I feel I would be remiss in my duty not to mention it. I have taken it myself and given it to my patients with most surprising and satisfactory results. And those who wish to increase their strength, power and endurance will find it a most remarkable and wonderfully effective remedy."

NOTE—Nuxated Iron, which is prescribed and recommended above by physicians in such a great variety of cases, is not a patent medicine nor secret remedy, but one which is well known to druggists, and whose ingredients are widely prescribed by eminent physicians both in this country and abroad. Unlike older inorganic iron products it is easily assimilated, does not injure the teeth, make them black nor upset the stomach, on the contrary is a most potent remedy in nearly all forms of indigestion as well as for nervous, run-down conditions. The manufacturers have such great confidence in Nuxated Iron that they offer to forfeit $100.00 to any charitable institution if they cannot take any man or woman under 60 who lacks iron, and increase their strength 100 per cent or over in four weeks' time, provided they have no serious organic trouble. They also offer to refund your money if it does not at least double your strength and endurance in four weeks' time. It is dispensed by all good druggists.

swept forward in his mind. A dozen nameless fears lurked in the background of his thoughts. His brain a-reel Thibidoux rushed back down the stairs.

"Eloise!" he shouted, "Awaken!" As if words were necessary to supplement the racket he had made clattering down the bare steps. "Eloise!" he cried. "Something dreadful has happened!"

He gained the door of his master's chamber without having received response to his summons.

Surely she could not be asleep.

"Eloise!" he demanded frantically. "Do you hear?" Awaken!"

No reply.

Exasperated, Thibidoux fell to pounding the panel with his fists. At the first few blows the door, which was unlatched, swung open.

"Eloise!" thundered Henri, invading his sister's room with heavy strides. He struck another match. "El——"

The burning match fell from his hand an instant after its trembling flame had revealed the interior of the room. Thibidoux stepped back speechless. That room, too, was empty. The bed was untouched!

The fears which clutched the heart of Thibidoux were nameless no longer. Lighting the lamp which reposed in a bracket extending from the wall beside Eloise's dressing-table, Henri began a hurried search of the room. She might, at least, have left a note, confirming his suspicions. It would have been a woman's way. An excited rummage of chiffonier, dressing-table, closet, and unmade bed failed to disclose such evidence—which was but natural, since there was none to be found.

The distant, plaintive wail of a locomotive whistle smote his ears.

"My God!" The truth flashed upon him, and instinctively snatched out his watch.

It was precisely two-ten o'clock.

Thibidoux sank heavily into a chair, literally defeated and baffled for the first time in his life. His blood seethed in impotent rage. His fury choked him. He trembled. She had beaten him completely.

"The traitress!" he hissed. "Conniving with that detective! Turned against me!"

His hands clutched until the fingernails dug into his palms.

At that moment, Eloise, breathless and with the blanch of terror upon her face, raced across the moonlit lawn and burst thru the front door downstairs. A wild, wounded cry was on her lips. She was a frightened disillusioned, frantic at the night she had just beheld.

CHAPTER XIX.

THEIR horseback ride brought Camden and Sturgis and the rescued Patrice safely to Abbeville in time to board the early morning train for New Orleans, which paused at the village long enough to take on fuel and water. It was here that Patrice missed the lost slipper for the first time. The discovery was occasion for considerable maidenly embarrassment.

"Must have dropped it off during the ride," commented Sturgis, lightly, "and like as not some one will find it and at once set out looking for the modern Cinderella who lost it."

"In that case I hope he does not succeed in his quest!" was the fervent rejoinder from Patrice. "It is the most unsightly shoe I have. I should be ashamed to claim it."

Sturgis found time before the train arrived to visit the City Hotel. He told Patrice he wanted to get his insurance for belongings, which only was a half-truth. While at the hotel he wrote this brief note to Eloise:

"My Dear Eloise: He winced at the familiarity!: On arriving in Acadia I found a telegram which calls me away on urgent business, so will be obliged to leave tonight. This explains my inability to accept your generous invitation to come to Wade Hall at seven tomorrow evening. I trust, however, circumstances will relent to such extent that I may return soon and see you. With kindest regards and memories of happy hours. C. C. STURGIS."

Sturgis just had time to post the letter in the slot in the front door of the post-office before the train pulled in. He obtained Pullman accommodations for Patrice, engaging the last unoccupied berth on the train. Sturgis himself was in no mood for sleep. He was quite content to recline in a chair in the day coach, trying to digest the extraordinary happenings of the twenty hours just passed.

Fatigue demanded its toll, however, and took it. Lulled by the swaying of the train and the rhythmic, metallic dust of the wheels, his mind, like his body beneath him, Sturgis dozed off asleep.

The sun was shining full in his face and the car was noisy with excitement preparatory to leave the train at their journey's end, when he awoke. Refreshed, but reproachful that he should have wasted precious hours in slumber, Sturgis started back thru the train to rejoin Patrice. The thought, in his mind, of what had transpired once before when she had been left alone quickened his step. He encountered a porter in the vestibule of Patrice's car.

"Has the young lady in lower eight awakened?" he asked.

"Just called her, suh," grinned the darky, "few minutes ago. Sorry to disturb her rosy slumbers, but said de late last night, but mah orders is to git all de folks out by seven o'clock, as we due in N'Orleans seven-thirty."

Sturgis slipped a quarter into the negro's palm and entered the car.

"Good morning, Miss Patrice."

Patrice presented a picturesquely pathetic spectacle, huddled in the corner of her seat, with her shoeless foot tucked under the voluminous skirt of her dress.

"Sit down by me, please," she appealed. "With all my other anxieties you may think it heartless of me to be concerned with such trifles, but I am nearly mortified to death. The whole car is staring at my clothes."

And frankly, in the disordered frock she had worn in her prison, Patrice was not garbed for traveling. Sturgis found himself toward relieving the painful situation as much as possible.

"But never mind," he consoled, taking his place beside her, "in just a few minutes now we shall be in New Orleans. A closed cab will take us to mother's house and she will fit you up in the matter of clothes. And this time, rest assured, I shall not be duped as I was last time when we rode to New Orleans together. You shall reach my mother's home in safety, never fear."

The train drew under the shed at the Union Station and stopped. Sturgis plotted the girl swiftly thru the throng at the depot, placed her in a taxicab, and the next minute they were being whizzed uptown toward the Sturgis home, while the detective listened to the story of Patrice's experiences following her kidnaping. She was in the midst of the recital when the automobile turned out of beautiful St. Charles avenue and halted at the palm-lined curb in front of a fine old place with Doucher street, midway in the block between St. Charles avenue and Prytania street.

"Enter," Sturgis, holding open the gate. "This is our family home! Yes, indeed! Been in the Sturgis family ever since we began paying the rent last October."

Sturgis' travesty availed little toward cheering the embarrassed girl, who gathered her little dress about her and shrinkingly clutched the arm of her companion. Then her eyes brightened with the prospect that soon she again would be in search of her father.

Mrs. Sturgis she found a pleasing, silver-haired, motherly old lady, in her sixties, perhaps. Patrice liked her on first sight. Mrs. Sturgis had brought his mother on to New Orleans following his transfer by the Government. Coming from a small town in rural Ohio, where she was born, educated and married, she had experienced some hesitancy at taking up her new home in the South. The widow of an officer in the Union army, and likewise the daughter and brother of officers who had cast their lot with the North in the great war of States, she had feared that her new neighbors in Dixie might have memories which would prove barriers to friendships; that the breach between the sympathies and passions which had filled the hearts of the people of the North and the South half a century before might not entirely be healed during her short span, in her old age, a stranger in a strange land.

These forebodings she had put aside, however, making them subservient to her saintly conception of a mother's duty: and when her married son had called upon her to come and make a home for him in the South, she came.

Which spirit had healed her anxieties groundless. The bitterness, which is supposed by some Northern people to abound in the breasts of those sires defended the Lost Cause was not there. She learned with no small surprise, too, that she possessed a fund of truth concerning the widely heralded "negro problem" of the South. She found in the South much sympathetic understanding between the white race and the one her soldier kin shed their blood to set free—more than existed in some of the North. New Orleans was different from Columbus and Cincinnati. While she had no desire to force such convictions herself, she was enabled at least to appreciate the Southern point of view, when mothers proudly spoke of the virtues of their number devoutly believe—that the negro was much better off under the old regime than the new.

Before his mother's arrival Sturgis had leased an old home in a substantial residential section and engaged a negro woman as cook and maid-of-all-work. Before Mrs. Sturgis was comfortably settled in her new surroundings, the ladies of the neighborhood, many from distinguished old Orleanian families, called upon the newcomer and formally welcomed her into their midst. It was a welcome which left nothing to be desired. She could not expect to have received in a city where flats, family hotels and such vicarious modes of living are the unsatisfactory substitutes for homes.

Within a month Mrs. Sturgis felt as thu she had always lived in New Orleans for years. Her son's frequent and unexpected absences from the city left her morning conclusions who gave her no time for loneliness.

Sturgis explained that Miss Wade and himself were old friends. Mrs. Sturgis took Patrice in charge, and by the time Carrie, the maid, had the grapefruit and the coffee on the table, the girl had emerged from upstairs in one of Mr. Sturgis' gowns, and wearing her slippers. At breakfast she continued the story of her adventures, the older woman sitting by and punctuating the narrative with audible interjections.

Of the circumstances of her abduction at the depot by Thibidoux and Binot she knew nothing, for when the latter's noisome chloroformed saturated cloth was held to her nostrils, her senses swam, and the next she knew was her awakening in the back of a big automobile which was bouncing along at a terrific pace over a country road. Day was breaking, when the car halted, and Thibidoux at the wheel and Binot in the seat beside the girl, swung into the porte-cochere at Wade Hall.

"And you recall nothing previous to your awakening in the motor car on the country road?" questioned Sturgis.

"Nothing; I was unconscious," said Patrice.

"It was a big black car, you say. Are you certain? It could not have been a taxicab?"

"No. It was a private car—a big limousine."

"When seized and taken from the taxicab which I escorted you to at the station, you remember? You were sped away in another reguiation taxicab You have no recollection of when or where or how you were removed to the larger car?"

"None in the least."

"H-m-m!" reflected Sturgis. "That's disappointing——"

"Why?" the girl asked. "I am not so particular what abductors happened to me, so long as I came out of it safely, my father——"

"Just the point. Your father is a prisoner in a lonely house in the Esplanade. That house, wherever it is, must be a sort of operating base for Thibidoux and his crew. It is reasonable to expect that on the night of your adventure you were transferred from the taxicab to the limousine at that point. It is quite likely."

"My father a prisoner in the Esplanade!" gasped Patrice. "You are certain of that?"

Sturgis explained how he came by the information. Patrice begged that she might be permitted to join the search for the house at once, but Sturgis' reasoning swayed her. The secret of the man took affectionate leave of his mother, counseled Patrice to be of good cheer, and left the house to communicate with Crown, his chief.

Meanwhile Mrs. Sturgis busied herself to supply Patrice with a wardrobe.

The most interesting story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.00, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

He Withdrew.

Cornelius Popcorn walked into the great merchant's office.

"Say," he whined, "I wan'er see the boss."

"You can't," said the red-cheeked youngster. "You can see me if you like."

"Go on! I guess you ain't no good to me. I wan'er see ther boss, an' I'll wait all day if necessary."

"Right-o!" he answered, cheerily. "Care to sit down?"

He sat down without thanks, and half an hour, and then an hour, elapsed. Still no sign of the boss.

"Say," he began, "when's this boss of yours likely to appear?"

"I don't know," replied the sweet child. "But, anyway, I don't want to see me, do you, and you can wait."

"Sure I can wait. My business is with the boss and with the office boy."

"Right-o! As long as you don't mind waiting, you'll be able to see him. He joined up again, and he's going to France this morning. He'll probably be back about the end of 1917!"

Terrible Mistake.

"Hello, Brown," said Jones. "I saw your wife downtown, by Jove, that new coat of hers must have cost a pot of money. You're doing especially well at present."

"No, not exactly," replied Brown, moodily. "Fact is, she got it by accident."

"By accident!" exclaimed Jones. "How was that?"

"Well, old fellow, it was this way: I got home rather late the other night. The hall was very dark, but I could just distinguish a figure standing by the chair. I slipped up to her, put my arms around her waist and whispered, 'Mary, give me a little kiss.'"

"But—but," stammered Jones, "I thought your wife's name was Kate?"

"Hit it," murmured Brown; "that's how she got the coat."

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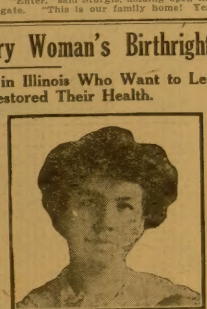
A Few of the Many Women in Illinois Who Want to Let Others Know What Restored Their Health.

Mrs. Kate Justin, residing at South Vermilion St., Danville, Ill., says: "I am glad to tell what benefit I received from the use of Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. I had suffered with a woman's trouble; was weak and hardly able to do any work. I could not cook and could not stand up long enough to do anything but wash a few dishes. I saw 'Favorite Prescription' advertised in the papers, so I bought at once and began using it. I gained steadily so that my weight went up from 110 to 190 pounds. I have been well since and never have had to use any such medicine."

Mrs. Jas. Berger of 226 Jackson St., Aurora, Ill., says: "It is with a great privilege to recommend Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. I had woman's trouble which was aggravated by heavy work and lifting. I was sick every little while and ought to have given up my work, but kept on. Other medicines had failed to help me and a lady recommended 'Favorite Prescription.' I took her advice and took the 'Prescription' for a time. First it helped me—then it cured me."

Mrs. Anna Smith, who lives at 409 Jefferson St., Ottawa, Ill., says: "I have used Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. At one time when rather run-down I took two bottles. I found it just as represented—a first-class tonic and nervine



MRS. JAS. BERGER.

I have always heard it well spoken of and praised by all women who have used it."

Any druggist can supply you with Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription in liquid or tablets. No alcohol, narcotic or any harmful ingredient. Or, send Dr. V. M. Pierce, Buffalo, N. Y., 10 cents for large trial package of tablets.—Advertisement.

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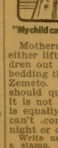

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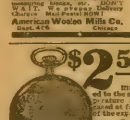

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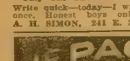

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One in a Million.

(Continued From Page 3.)

blue processional of the woods into the corridors of the coming night.

And at last the sacred parson kissed her and shook hands with her husband and shambled away across the meadow.

Slowly northward thru the dusk stole the canoe once more, bearing the bride of an hour, her head on her husband's knee. The stars came out to watch them: a necklace of bubbles trailed in the paddle's wake, stringing away, twinkling thru the starlight.

Slowly thru the perfumed gloom they glided, her warm head on his knees, his eyes fixed on the vague water ahead.

A star crashed thru the reeds ashore, the June fawn stared with eyes like rubies in the dark.

Onward, onward, thru the spell-bound forest; and at last the windows of the house glimmered reflected in the water.

Garcide and Crawford awaited them on the veranda as they came up, rising in chilling silence, ignoring the offered hands of greeting.

"I've a word to say to you," snarled the Hon. Jack Garcide, "for your ear"—and another word for your fool of an aunt!"

She shrank back against her husband, amazed and hurt. "What do you mean?" she stammered; "we—we are married. Have you not speak to my—my husband?"

A silence, too awful to last, was broken by a hoarse laugh.

"You're a fool, Dirt, Jim," said the elder Crawford, slowly. "Ophir Steel won't slip thru your fingers when I'm under the rod. Been married long, Jim

* * *

THE SAME OLD STORY.

The cynic shakes his head
And talks of folly's way.
Of spreading money greed,
Of crooked men and ways.
How honor's dead and sold
For dollars and for dimes,
And sadly hearkens back
Unto the good old times

The good old times of yore!
For men were honest then
And did not plan to steal
The goods of fellow-men—
When public good was goal
And honesty was king.
When law was strictly just
And virtue everything.

These modern times, they cry
Deteriorated are,
More venal and corrupt
Than former days by far
Tis true they do forget
In anger just our span
Diogenes in vain
Searched for an honest man.

* * *

WISE OLD UNCLE.

When Appleby broke the news to his young wife that his Uncle Jack was coming to make them a visit she expressed pleasure at the prospect as cheerfully as she could, but she looked alarmed.

"He's a jolly old boy," said Appleby. "I know you'll like him, Arabella."

"But I'm afraid he won't like me, John."

"Nonsense, why not, I'd like to know? Of course he'll fall in love with you at the first glance, the way I did."

"Flatterer!" laughed Mrs. Appleby. "But seriously I know he'll be scandalized at the way we live."

"Why, my dear girl, what's the matter with the way we live? Haven't we a cozy little flat, and don't we get excellent meals in the very first apartment below ——"

"Yes, but you know you have told me yourself that your Uncle Jack has very rigid, old-fashioned opinions on the duties of wives, and he'll think me lady and incompetent because I don't cook our own meals myself. I just know he will."

"Well, of course, it's true he does think an awful lot of the domestic virtues. Being an old bachelor he can afford to."

"Why don't we begin to have our meals at home?" he added, after a pause. "We always intended to some time, and with all our wedding silver and china it wouldn't be any trick at all to get ready."

"But, John, I simply wouldn't dare to begin to cook when we have a guest. You know I've terribly inexperienced. I warned you when you asked me to marry you."

"Yes, Arabella, but you're so quick and bright, you could learn to cook in no time. All you need is a little practice."

"But I don't want to practice on your uncle, Jack! That would be a fearfully dangerous experiment."

"Well, then, why won't we employ a cook?" Appleby asked grandly.

"Oh, that would be dreadful! I don't know anything about managing servants. I should be awfully frightened and embarrassed if I had suddenly to begin to direct a cook. Now you see, sir, the results of marrying a homeless orphan right out of boarding school."

"I'm perfectly satisfied, young woman, so don't you go and criticise my wife."

"Dear me," Mrs. Appleby's eyes glowed. "But what about Uncle ——"

"Well, we promise to keep house ——"

"We could do it easily, Mrs. Briggs could send our meals up the back stairs, and I could put them on the table, and we'd serve them just as if they had been cooked in our own little kitchen I think it's a splendid plan."

Appleby seized upon the idea eagerly, for he realized that his uncle was not likely to look with favor upon their present mode of life. Inside of half an hour they had persuaded Mrs. Briggs, at whose table they took their meals, to do her share.

When Uncle Jack arrived he showed every sign of being highly pleased with his nephew's wife and their home. He continually congratulated the young pair on their good sense in starting out so early to make a real home instead of in "infernal boarding," as he called it, and at every meal nearly he praised Mrs. Appleby for her good housekeeping. And she did run with astonishing smoothness.

Now don't blush, little girl," he said when the young woman was one day quite overcome by his warm appreciation of the cooking. "John is a mighty lucky chap to have such a capable helpmeet as you."

Another time she was almost reduced to tears when, handing her his notebook, he asked her to jot down the rule for the delicious pudding they had that night, so that he could have his housekeeper make it.

"Oh, Uncle Jack, I'll have to look in the book and see," she said. "I'll copy it for you tomorrow."

"Very well, my dear. You see, I'm anxious to compare some of your culinary secrets."

At this Appleby laughed so uproariously that his wife was obliged to retreat from the room in disorder, and when John hastily joined her she exclaimed between laughter and tears: "I'm not going to carry on this deception any longer; I'm ashamed of myself."

"You'll be ashamed," said Uncle Jack. He had followed them unobserved to the kitchen. They turned and looked at him in consternation. He laughed at their confusion

"You needn't be ashamed of the deception, for there wasn't any," he went on. "I came out here the very first day of my visit to black my shoes, and Mrs. Briggs" maid was just bringing up the soup for dinner and she told me all."

"And you've been having a bit of fun with us," young Appleby said grumpily

"Well, I thought it was a good joke, and a clever one, too. Now, Arabella, I'll tell you what I wish to give you as a parting present, my dear—a course at the domestic science school."

"Oh, Uncle Jack," she laughed, "that makes us more than even, but I'll accept it gladly."

* * *

The Tripe.

He came home late from the mill and entered a home smelling as only a home can smell after a day's washing. The good woman had retired, so Tom sat down, ate his supper from the basin on the table and retired also.

"Did tha find the supper to tha liking, lad?" she asked sleepily.

"Aye, it did aat all. I ate the lot. I liked the liquor verra well, but had a rare job wi' the tripe."

"Tripe!" cried his mate, "tripe?"

"Aye, tripe—in basin on table."

"Well, well! If tha's ate what was in basin, tha'll have to buy thaself new collars and all, 'cos tha's eaten collars and starch. Tha supper was on a plate in th' oven."

'Never Mind How Strong You Are—

What Dye KNOW?

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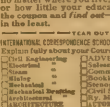
FINE OLD VIOLINS



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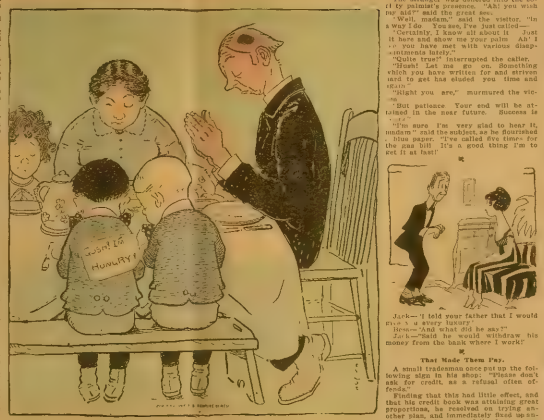
"BEN BOLT"—The Kid That You Were Yourself.


Don't you remember the Sunday, Ben Bolt;
When Ma had the preacher to dinner—
He kept asking grace for considerable space
But he ate just as much as a sinner

Not the Right One.

In Berlin the street cars have been placed in charge of women conductors on account of the shortage of men. The comic paper, Ulk, of that city publishes the following joke in that connection:

"Look here, my friend, what on earth are you waiting for? You've been standing here for an hour in the pouring rain."

"I'm waiting for a car."

"But at least five have gone by."

"Yes, but not the one with the pretty cashier."

IT'S BETTER SO.

Perhaps we this you, too, have seen
That those fond dreams we dreamed of old
Were foolish, paltry, poor and mean—
But fairy gold.

Youth's silly dreams! Let us be glad
That they are wrought out to our lives—
Dears, crazy husbands you have had,
We, loony wives!

No Such Thing.

Elisha Lee, chairman of the conference committee of railway managers, said in a recent interview in New York:

"Our exorbitant profits are as mythical as the good steaks of Ireland.

"An American, you know, was touring in Ireland and, stopping at a wretched inn, he said to the young attendant gayly, rubbing his hands:

"'Ah, young man, I'm as hungry as a bear. Grill me at once one of your famous Irish steaks—one of those real Irish steaks, juicy and tender and two inches thick, with fried potatoes and onions.'

"The lad stared at the traveler. Then he closed out. On his return the man said:

"'Well, steak coming on all right?'

"'Steak, sorry, said the boy, 'father says that if he had a steak like that in the house he'd eat it himself, so he would.'"

Gird to Hear It.

The stranger was ushered into the study of the minister's presence. "Ah! you want my aid!" said the great sec.

"Well, madam," said the visitor, "in a way I do. You see, I've just called—"

"Certainly. I know all about it. Just sit back and show me your palm. Ah! I see you have met with various disappointments lately."

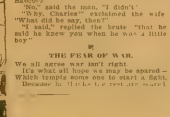
"Quite true," interrupted the caller.

"Hush! Let me go on. Something which you have written for and striven hard to get has eluded you time and again."

"Right you are," murmured the victim.

"But patience. Your end will be attained in the near future. Success is coming."

"I'm sure I'm very glad to hear it, madam," said the subject, as he flourished his hat. "I've called five times for the gas bill. It's a good thing I'm to get it at last!"



Wanted Other Things.

While Alec sat playing on the hearthrug with his toys, father and mother sat thoughtfully discussing the increased cost of living. The small boy took it all in, altho they did not know it.

A week or so later his father called to him.

"Look here, Alec," he said proudly "isn't this a lovely little sister that mother has given you?"

Alec looked at the infant, but said nothing.

"Don't you like her?" asked father

"I know where she's from," said the small boy, disappointed. "But there were lots of things we wanted more."

The Brute!

Mr. Babcock had just been telling his wife of an old friend.

"And he said he knew me when I was a little girl!" interrupted the wife.

"No," said Babcock, "he didn't say anything of the sort."

"But you just said he did," s-d Mrs Babcock.

"No," said the man, "I didn't."

"Why, Charles!" exclaimed the wife "What did he say, then?"

"I said," replied the brute "that he said he knew you when he was a little boy."

THE FEAR OF WAR.

We all nerve war isn't right
It's what all hope we may be spared—
Which tempts some one to start a fight,
Because he thinks he need not succeed.

Made Something, Anyway.

"Harrah! Hurrah! Five dollars for my latest story, 'A Modern Husband.'"

"Congratulations, young man. From whom did you get the money?"

"From the express company. They her friend, 'an I'm hopin' 'tis the cashier."

Sure to Work.

"You s-y my husband needs exercise but he won't take any, and I don't know how t- make him," said a woman, plaintively. "Is there any way in which we can force him to exercise?"

"Let him sew on buttons," answered Dr. Dumdum, on windy days, making him wear a hat that will be sure to blow off!" asked the doctor.

Bookrupkay—"I st ought t'ork your four stories in on- block would hardly pay."

Burnitskey—Listen to reason! One fire, or two, maybe, is easy put out, but, not four at a time!"

Mr Boggs—Quick, quick, there's a fire started in the cellar

Daughter—But, papa, that's hot water in the pitcher; twill only make it worse

Subject to Them.

"That's a peculiar looking bruise you have on the back of your neck," observed the doctor.

"Yes," said the patient. I'm subject to bones. You see, I'm a clarinet player in an orchestra.

"I don't see how that can produce bruises on the back of your neck."

"It doesn't produce them exactly, but it places me in a position where I am very liable to get them."

How is that?

I sit directly in front of the man who plays the slide trombone."

Lastly Understood.

An exhibitant in Canada had taken up his own holding, but, altho he worked hard, he found little to reward him for his labors. One day when he was very much depressed by the situation a stranger accosted him and asked:

"Why is it that nobody fishes in the river yonder?"

"There's no fish!" the farmer grunted.

"How is it that there are no fish in such a fine river?" asked the other.

"Stranger, if you could get out of this barren country as easy as a fish kin, do ye reckon you'd stay?"

Safer In Numbers.

"I have here," said the agent, "a utensil that no housekeeper can afford to be without."

"What is it?" asked the hard faced woman at the door

"It's a combined corkscrew, can opener, pocketknife, screwdriver, tack hammer, glass cutter, and——"

"Hold on a minute. I don't want one of those things.

"Why not, madam?"

"By keeping all those tools separate it is impossible for my husband to lose more than one at a time."

Partial Cause.

One young man who was highly sensitive about an impediment in his speech went to a stammerers' institute and asked for a course of treatment. The professor asked him if he wanted a full or partial course.

"I p-p-artial co-ourse.

"To what extent would you like a partial course?"

"Enough b-so that whe-when I go to a f-f-foreign c-country and ask for a co-ch-chrysanth (whistle) c-m-mum the th-thing won't w-w-ilt before I get it."

"Safety First."

"Don't seem to be anybody at home. Where's the family?" asked the Bilville visitor.

"Well," was the reply, "the childern are off at school, an' last week the old lady left to take military trainin' in the preparedness camps."

"But where's the old man?"

"Last seen of him, he was crawlin' into a stovepipe an' shuttin' the lid after him."

Lived Long.

Native—"There are the Cheops twins. They are 14 years old."

Stranger—"To what do they credit their long lives?"

Native—"Two letters, and never used it."

Naval Terms.

"This is the ironclads. She has armored hide."

"Um. And what's this?"

"The giraffe."

"Gee! He's got a periscope, boss, street!"

IF.

When Noah in his dreadnought ark
Sailed o'er the wild, wet, woeful, waste,
The whale might spout or dogfish bark,
Or shark its maw, he did not haste.
He feared no monster of the deep,
His guarding of the hosps of pres;
For "frightfulness" that murders sleep,
You see, was not invented then.

But had the worthy ancients known
Just how a mine is made and fired,
Refusing still to build their own,
They would have blown up Noah's ark!

And all our race, nipped in the bud,
Had perished with the beasts and such.
And culture had been lost in mud—
Not that it matters very much!

A COMMERCIAL CHARMER.

At Jenny's place my lunch I take,
Albeit I know the grub is vile,
But I go not for mere food's sake,
I go to feast on Jenny's smile.

Ah, friend, that same is well worth while!

For it brave the cramp, the ache,
The kneeing well fair Jenny's guile;
Her smile is but a trader's fake!

For Jenny smiles on one and all,
A smile that oozes from the pill.
Men see that radiant smile, and fall,
And eat burnt beans, and pay the bill!

For Jenny's smile's so passing sweet
It makes her junk seem fit to eat!

Not in Favor of It.

Miss Vine—Do you favor women proposing?

Mrs. Oaks—Certainly not. When a woman picks out a man she should make him propose"

Just One Question.

"Well, I'd be ashamed if I had as bald a head as you! Look at my head of hair!"

"I don't want to ask you one question"

"Yes"

"Did you ever see grass growing on a bald head?"

Verbal Economy.

Little Johnny's mother asked him the other day how he liked some new playfellows whose family had lately settled in the village.

"They play all right, mummy; but they use awful, naughty swear-words sometimes."

"Oh, Johnny!"

"You needn't mind, mummy. I don't use swear-words back! I only say 'is them 'Ditto'

Not Mental Labor.

Doctor—"You will have to give up all mental work for a few weeks."

Patient—"But, Doctor, in that case my income would cease. I earn my living by writing poems for the magazines."

Doctor—"Oh, you can keep on with that."

A Family Hotel.

In one of the hotels where nonresidents are admitted to the table d'hote luncheon and dinner, a man and a woman with a little boy took a corner. He had a black look and dark and eyes, while she had a boisterous bounce, which she was using ably.

When their cleansing of soiled linen had disturbed every other diner in the room the manager approached them.

"Madam, madam," he said to the lady, who was obviously the senior partner in the combine, "I must beg of you to be more restrained. If you want to continue your—er—discussion, please do it—er—quietly."

"Well!" snapped the lady tartly. "You advertise this as a family hotel, don't you?"

Wouldn't Be Kept Busy.

By a piece of good luck the new recruit had been appointed orderly to his captain and the latter was now giving him his instructions.

"I have to receive a few orders," he said, "and yourself and other boots and equipment. Then you clean my boots, buttons, belt, etc., shave me, see to my horse—which you must groom thoroly—and clean the equipment After that you go to your bed, help to serve out breakfast and after breakfast lead my horse a hand washing up. At eight o'clock you go on parade and drill till twelve——"

The recruit, whose face had been growing longer and longer, then interrupted: "Beg pardon, sir, but is there any one else in the army besides me?"

THE ANIMATED LOG

"Miss Jackson, I regrets to inform yo' dat we's done hesitated on dis sand-bar. An' I kain't pull de ole scow out.

Huh! Ize got er suspicion erbout dat fog floatin' out dere! Lemme take dat hat ob yo'sile wid dem Fedders in it, an' by rockin' it up in de form o'——

'A genuine fowl, I incline ter de opinion dat de fog kin be, not only tempted, but ——ded ter swallow it.

"Ah, if Ize not mistaken, we-all is gwine fer git home in time fer dat chicken dinner yet

"Nemmine erbout dat, honey, I sure will git yo' er hat ten times es purty es dat dey wuz!"—Illinois Siftings.

The Beautiful Spy

Or, The Wireless Torpedo

By Augustin W. Breeden

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CHAPTER IV.

LATER in the forenoon I went to Nathan Wherry's and asked him if he would not allow me to look up his torpedo and wireless data and put it in bank vault, where it would be safer. Nathan lives entirely by himself, except for an old negress that comes and cooks and cleans up for him every morning, and the house he lives in is naturally left a good deal alone.

"Those fellows came and went in a three-passenger aeroplane," I said. "They evidently knew just when you were going to make your demonstration."

"Oh, they couldn't have known," he protested. "Nobody knew but Miss Frost——"

"And Miss Jennie Seits and I," I added. "But what about my taking these contraptions and locking them up?"

"They're safer where they are," he insisted. And he still insisted, no matter what arguments I brought to bear.

Then I trained my guns on Miss Frost. "That woman is a spy," I told him.

"I know she is not!" he cried hotly.

"Wherry, you are a fool," I said. That woman is a spy. She got a message to those cutthroats to be out there last night, and if it hadn't been for me, they would have your torpedo in their possession this morning. Now, listen to reason. She brought me a bunch of forged credentials."

I told him of the letter from the prominent New York banker. Next I laid a transcript of the cipher letter she had sent to Doctor Burgmeister, before him. I thought surely these two things would convince him.

"That is all clear enough to me," he said. "She is what you call an adventuress, perhaps. She has to be that to live, poor girl. She has told me her story. She grew up a shopgirl in New York; and a scoundrel who was attracted by her beauty pursued her, and finally, being defeated in his evil purpose, fixed a crime upon her and had her sent to prison. The only way she could live after she got out of prison was by the aid of a powerful chief of a sort of clan in the New York slums, who said she desired to get clear away and lead a useful and upright life, and so she forged these credentials and came out here to work. Her sending that cipher message is no great mystery. She owes her very life to the friendship of that one noble men in New York. Naturally she would communicate with them occasionally."

"Nathan Wherry," I sneered, "you may be a great inventor, but you are a double distilled fool! There never was one. That woman has got the wool pulled over your eyes till you can't tell black from white."

But after I left him and had time to think the whole matter over, I began to doubt if I were not in the right. I knew that men have been condemned and hanged on purely circumstantial evidence, and, actually, circumstantial evidence was all that I had against this girl. Then there was a strong pleader in my heart to say a word toward help for her. Finally I wound up by deciding to call on her that night, beg her forgiveness for what I had said the night before and ask her to tell me frankly her whole history.

So that night, with a few tears and just a little feminine emotional tricks, Miss Frost told me her life story. Amused, astonished, interested as well, I listened and confess at once that it melted me and won me before it was half told. She had certainly been badly used; there was no doubt of that. And her story was authentic there was no doubt of that. She certainly had been stolen, and I referred me to people that I knew as well as I knew my own kinsmen. The name of the chief of the clan was not Paulino Pino. It was a name that has been in the New York dailies several times, and should I give it here it would be at once recognised.

"Now," she said tremulously, when she had finished, "can't you forgive me for that one little forged testimonial?"

I did forgive her. I was so touched by her story that I forgot to ask her about her cipher message to Suite 22, Hotel Iturraga.

But the next day I begged Wherry to share the secrets of his wireless torpedo with me. "You might be killed," I argued, "in which case the secret of the torpedo would be lost to the world."

That is very true," he answered seriously, and I could see that no one was within eavesdropping distance he told me a great deal about his wonderful invention that I had not known before. A part of it, and I had seen the thing demonstrated, but never until I heard him explain it and saw his fine eyes flash with enthusiasm did I really see the bigness of it all.

"Think of it," he said. "These things can be built to go for fourteen hours, and can develop a speed greater than the swiftest battleships. A nation which builds a large supply of them and a large fleet of aeroplanes to carry them out to sea and direct their movements against enemy craft, can dominate the world—can give the world in the interest of universal peace."

I suddenly leaned up and grasped his hand and hurt his wounded arm by my enthusiasm. "You are a great man, Wherry," I cried. "But will you not let the United States have this invention?" I said. "If you will, I will see to it that it will see it only in the interest of universal peace," he said with dignity, "or I will let the United States have it if she is actually threatened with invasion."

Nathan Wherry had also risen to his feet and was pacing back and forth in his excitement, speaking in low, tense tones. "I will give my invention only to a League of Peace sworn to police the world," he said.

After this pregnant speech we both fell silent for a little while. Finally I said: "I don't know but you are right, Wherry; but meantime you are trying to hold this secret as a private individual, and as such you will lose it to some ambitious power who may use it for a devilish purpose. You are taking an awful responsibility. Already unscrupulous parties are after it. Suppose it falls into the hands of some absolutely unscrupulous nation? What then?"

"You are right," he said at length. "I will share this secret with you, and we will both probably have to hand it over to the U. S. Government for protection in a short time. I realized that last night."

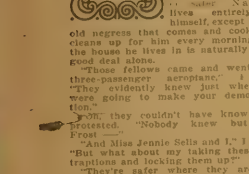
He then brought up the torpedo from its hiding-place and explained its workings to me, using for the purpose a set of blue prints that he kept with him. The torpedo itself was hard to open. "At present," he explained with a smile, "I can't be induced to open one of a specially constructed wrench only one of which is in existence, and I keep it constantly in my pocket or locked next to my heart. But inside there," he went on to explain, "there is a little coherer, or connection that is made," as we say, only while it is being played upon by wireless Or Hertzian waves." He took from his vest pocket a little glass tube which was sealed to platinum wires with platinum planes on the ends and in which was a very small bank powdery substance. "The coherer is exactly like this," he said. "That substance you see in there is a chemical found only in nature. It can no more be built up artificially than decent-sized diamonds can be built artificially. The metals that form it were fused in the bowels of the earth, under a pressure unheard of by man, and at a heat that no blast furnace could ever create. As I said, it is found only in nature, and at present in only one spot in the world—in the world-power in the southeastern part of——"

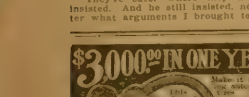
He leaned over and whispered the rest to me. I know I turned pale at what he said. He had named one of the warmost powerful nations in the world, with or without good reason. I have always believed would be unscrupulous if ever put to the test.

For a long time we two sat silent. Finally he said: "I will divide my slender supply of this chemical with you, and you must redivide it and keep it in two separate places. So long as the war is going on no one can get it. It can be got out of Europe, and an ounce of it is just about the amount I own. You see how I can only show right grains to each coherer."

"But who wouldn't the ordinary coherer do?" I asked. "Why waste your time on this machine?" I asked.

"That is a long story," he smiled. "I worked on that for years. You saw how I controlled the movement of my torpedo on the pond last night. My control of the coherer is almost immediate, like my control of the tones on my violin. The other method would be slow and mechanical, more like an indirect control of the pianist. Oh, it can be done all right, but a dirigible torpedo built on that principle ought to be as much like mine as a racing scenery and team is like your racing car. I had worked and worked and nearly gone crazy trying to devise a better and more perfect coherer when a certain man in Berlin, who had learned of my work, sent me a bottle of this chemical to find out from me what it was. I began to experiment with it and found that it seemed to be the most perfect coherer material in the world. Of course, I did not let our nefarious friend know that, but I got him to tell me where I was to be found, and afterward I went to Washington and had the Smithsonian Library there read all there is known about it. No one but myself, so far as I can learn from printed records, suspects the value of this chemical. I'll tell you what you do. You come back here day after to-morrow night, and by that time I'll send out all these blue prints from which the separate parts of the machine were made, and make copies of all of them and give them to you, and also give you half of what I have of this chemical. You see, I had each separate part of this machine built by a different concern, so that no one company would get wise;





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Boys, Girls, Men, Women, Everybody—Here's a real automobile—just like a big one—that you can ride in and have the time of your life. Runs on the ground like the big cars. Has a horn that honks. Any one can easily ride it after a few minutes. If you want the wonderful automobile, send us your name right away. Write a letter, or use a postal card. Address Dept. 2014 Cullerna & 19th St., Chicago, Ill.
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and about all I did was to assemble the machine. Be sure and come back, day after tomorrow night."

I said I would, and left. I could see that he felt just as I did about the whole matter. The three spies had disappeared as swiftly and mysteriously as they had come, yet neither of us had any doubt that they would return again soon to play the second card in their hand.

They came all right—rather they sent a representative. I had just kissed my mother good night, and sat down in the library to read for a while before going to bed, but being weary from the previous night's adventures, I fell asleep, awoke with a start, feeling very chilly. I think what awakened me was that some one switched out the reading light at which I was sitting. I arose, and crossing to the door, fumbled for the light button on the facings. Then some one said very low and cautiously:

"Hands up! High!"

My hands went up automatically. There was just enough light filtered into the room from the street lamps outside to show me a tall man with a very long pistol in his hand.

"Back over there at the fireplace," he told me, as he poked me in the ribs with his pistol. "Now turn round, and keep your hands high."

I did so. I am by naturally a nervous man, but this thing of being ordered about one's own library by a man with a young cannon in a bit disconcerting to say the least. But I did not so far lose my head as to forget to take note of everything possible. I had stood me on facing the mantelpiece mirror, and now I looked into it and could see him moving all about the room, using a tiny flashlight in searching, every place where even a pocketknife could be hidden.

I never got a look at his face, for he kept his tiny flashlight played upon the objects he was searching and never on himself. But I estimated him to be a man nearly six feet tall, and rather muscular and heavier than flesh. I would have said from his movements that he was not over 35. I tried to detect any foreign accent in his voice since he he spoke, but if he were a foreigner, the brogue had been completely ironed out by a long residence in this country.

He searched the room most thoroly, and I knew he was no common robber, for he did not offer to take my ring, my watch, nor my billbook; but of course I felt sure from the start that he was searching for something that he thought Wherry had given me.

He went over the room the second time, and then he came close to me, poked the pistol into my ribs and asked angrily:

"Where is it?"

"What?" I asked.

"The stuff he makes his coherers of."

"I don't know what you mean or what you are talking about," I said.

"I'm talking about the coherer material that the fool Wherry used in his devil-machine," he hissed. "Where is it? Answer me or I'll blow your insides out!"

"I don't know what you're talking about," I repeated, putting all the dullness and lack of comprehension into my voice that I could.

"I'll make you open up," he began; but just then my mother called to me from the hall, "Henry, are you in there? What is the matter?"

At the sound of her voice the man leaped like a cat thru one of the long French windows which he had left open for the purpose, and disappeared like a shadow amongst the shrubbery of the grounds. I hurriedly searched the drawer where I kept my automatic, but he must have feared that at the moment he entered the room and before he switched out my light. I ran into the hall and tried to assure my mother that everything was all right. I had tried my desk telephone and found it dead. I now tried the hall telephone, but of course the wires were cut.

Just as I turned away from the telephone in disgust, all the grounds were suddenly lighted up, and with a swish and a boom I saw a rocket go high into the air and explode.

"Harry! Harry! What does it mean?" asked my mother in the greatest alarm.

"Common robbery——" I began. My words were interrupted by a detonation that shook the town, and rattled the glass in the panels beside the door.

"Harry," cried my mother, "that was the bank, and that rocket was a signal to blow it up!"

"I reckon so, mother," I replied as calmly as I could, for I was shaken to my soul. I was not thinking of the bank, for I knew these scoundrels were not after money. I was thinking, "If they are as desperate as this, what haven't they done to poor Wherry to make him tell!"

CHAPTER V.

WHEN I arrived at the bank, where the plate glass was all shattered, and fixtures, papers, and even money, scattered about the tiled floor, I found that our efficient sheriff was already there before me, and also about a dozen of the most fearless citizens of our village. But there seemed nothing to do but to pick up our scattered effects. Clark, the cashier, was one of the first to arrive after I got there. I whispered to him:

"Clark, no one but the insurance companies must know how great or how little our losses are here. Stand pat, stand, you must, and give no statement whatsoever."

He nodded that he understood, and I knew he would be discreet. I didn't care to have half my townsmen know that Wherry was developing a most important naval secret. I hastened upstairs to my office, and found everything there turned topsy-turvy, but the robbers were completely gone. They had disappeared as swiftly and mysteriously as on that night of the mill-pond fiasco. Of course, the three-passenger aeroplane was the explanation. I left the bank in charge of the cashier and the sheriff Johnson to one side.

"Wire a circle of important towns all round here, and tell every fool to look out for a big aeroplane, bring it down at any cost and arrest its occupants!"

"Same people as before," I told him. "I must go now to see Nathan Wherry. I will tell you more about it later, Mr. Johnson. Spare no expense in wiring, and give orders to anyone that my local newspaper man comes to you, send him to me."

As I hastened along the street toward Wherry's house, I was joined at Mrs. Peevy's gate by Miss Frost.

"Mr. Stallings, what terrible thing has happened?" she gasped.

I had never seen this wonderful creature in dishabille. If on parade she was wonderful in artistic corsage and coiffure, she was intoxicating in pink kimono, and bedroom slippers. I gasped as I looked at her. Then I said: "Bank's been robbed, that's all!"

"But why—why are you——" she began to stammer.

"Why am I going in the wrong direction? Is that what you were going to ask? Well, I suspect Nathan Wherry has been man-handled and perhaps killed. The wires are all cut in the house and also at my office were cut, and I am going to see how he was fared. Of course you must know, Miss Frost, it is not money these men are after."

She gave a little gasp, and presently we were both almost running, holding hands as we went, toward Nathan Wherry's. We found the door wide open, curely not locked, and sagged and tied to the iron of the bed on which he lay. The house looked as if a Kansas cyclone had struck it. We had been thoroly ransacked from garret to basement. I ungagged and untied the poor old man, and pulled him up into a sitting posture. He had been tormented, and the scoundrels had hurt his wounded arm terribly.

"Did they get anything?" I asked.

"Hardly a thing. What they got they won't be able to use."

The poor fellow was barely able to talk, and being satisfied on these points, I questioned him further. As he spoke I caught a sudden glimpse of Miss Frost's face, and I thought I saw a shadow of disappointment in her eyes. But the next instant I attributed her annoyed look to another cause, for just at that moment Jennie Sells became timidly thru the doorway. In contrast to Miss Frost she was fully dressed, but her hair was all down her back, and I must say she made a charming picture.

"What was the explosion?" asked Nate just as she came in.

"Yes, what was it?" asked Jennie Sells. "Was it—was it the bank?"

I read the question that she dared not express from her eyes.

"It was the bank," I answered succinctly.

"Tell me, how was it?" begged Wherry, but I put him off and told him I would tell him in the morning.

Before another hour had passed I gave out a story to the editor of our local paper to the effect that the attempt to rob the bank by blowing the vault had been frustrated by the prompt-ness and bravery of our citizens, and that it was believed the robbers had come and gone in an aeroplane

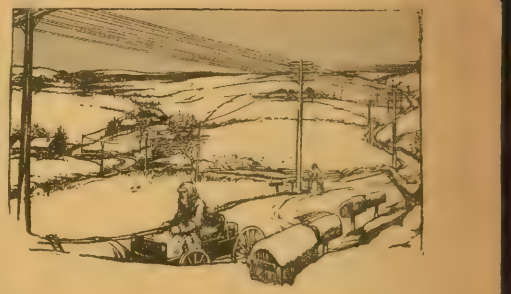
With the Fingers! Says Corns Lift Out Without Any Pain

Sore corns, hard corns, soft corns or any kind of a corn can shortly be lifted right out with the fingers if you apply a few drops upon the corn a few drops of freezone, says a Cincinnati authority.

It is claimed that at small cost one can get a quarter of an ounce of freezone at any drug store, which is said to rid one's feet of every corn or callus without pain or soreness or the danger of infection.

This new drug is an ether compound, and while sticky, dries the moment it is applied and does not inflame or even irritate the surrounding tissue.

This announcement will interest many women here, for it is said that the present high cost of living is putting corns on many a woman's feet.



Standards of Service

In rural communities clusters of mail delivery boxes at the crossroads evidence Uncle Sam's postal service. Here the neighbors trudge from their homes—perhaps a few yards, perhaps a quarter mile or so—for their mail.

Comprehensive as is the government postal system, still the service rendered by its mail carriers is necessarily restricted, as the country dweller knows.

Long before rural delivery was established the Bell System began to link up the farmhouse with the neighboring towns and villages. One-fourth of the 10,000,000 telephones in the Bell System are rural. They reach more places than there are post offices. Along the highways and private lanes the telephone poles lead straight up to the farmer's door.

He need not stir from the cheerful hearth ablaze in winter, nor grope along dark roads at night for friendly news or aid in time of trouble. Right in the heart of his home is his telephone. It is the American farmer's key to the outside world, and in no other country is it found.

AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES
One Policy One System Universal Service

GIRLS! *Three Pretty Paper Dolls, Standing up in a Row. Take a Pair of Scissors and See Them Grow.*

DOLL OUTFIT FREE

9	12	15	22	5
1		16	15	14	25

The first figure of the above two lines is a word; the next four figures spell a word; the next figure spells a word; and the last four figures spell a word. These four words spell the name of a subject that every little girl wants. The most interesting puzzle can be solved with a little study as shown above. There are twenty-six letters in the alphabet and we have used figures to spelling the four words. Instead of letters. Letter A is represented by number 1, B by 2, C by 3, and throughout the alphabet. A NEW PUZZLE EVERY THREE MONTHS. FOUR WORDS EACH WEEK. WE GIVE A SURPRISE OUTFIT CONTAINING OUR BEAUTIFUL COLLECTION FREE OUT OUR LOVELY DOLLS as the heart of every girl. THIS COLLECTION CONSISTS OF THREE DOLLS, NINE DRESSES, NINE HATS, etc. You can make all kinds of combinations. You can dress your little Girl dolls for Street, Party, Home, Winter Coat, Girl Scout, etc. The boy doll can be dressed as Scout, Base Ball Player and in regular Street Clothes. All you have to do is to answer with your answer a two-cents stamps for 4 cents of packing, mailing, etc. Try and make all the four words. ACT QUICKLY. Write the four words on a slip of paper, mail it immediately with your name and address and 4 cents in stamps and you will promptly receive as your reward the SURPRISE PACKET. Answer at once. Address

The Auction Co., Dept. H. Attleboro, Mass.

Free Surprise Present for Solving This Puzzle

The picture herewith shows five squares. The number in each square represents a letter in the alphabet. Spelled out, these letters spell the name of a great publishing company. Can you guess it?

2	15	25	3	5

Try it. It will pay you. Write the five letters, cut out this advertisement and mail it to us, and inclose four cents in stamps for packing, postage, mailing, etc. We will then send you a beautiful free surprise present which you will like.

AUTOMOBILE GIVEN AWAY

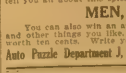
We will also make you a present of a Certificate of Entry for 2,000 free auto votes and tell you all about this splendid touring car which we are going to give away free.

MEN, WOMEN, BOYS AND GIRLS

You can also win an automobile in addition to splendid prizes, such as watches, cameras, and other things you like. We will also send you a copy of two great national publications worth ten cents. Write your name and address plainly.

Auto Puzzle Department J, W. D. BOYCE COMPANY, 500 North Dearborn Street, Chicago, Illinois

Elegant American Made Watch $5.95



$5.95

324 SQUARE INCHES MENDING TISSUE

THE WONDER OF THE AGE

ASTHMA

next day a Kansas City paper came out with the following headlines:

AEROPLANE ROBBERY AT WHEATLANDS, KAN.

Three Bold Robbers Drop From the Air and Wreck the Bank of Wheatlands, but Are Driven Off Without Much Loot by the Promptness and Bravery of Wheatlands Citizens—Aeroplane in Which They Escaped Not Yet Sighted.

After that last attempt of the [illegible] stead the secret service bothered Nathan Wherry and I lost no time in making that secret as secure as possible. He promptly furnished me with copies of his blue prints and with a vial of the coherer chemical. The people of the village were still profoundly ignorant of any connection between the two aeroplane visits and Nate Wherry's "contraptions," as they called his inventions. I took Sheriff Johnson into my confidence only to the extent of telling him that Nathan and I shared an important naval secret, and that these men were after it, and I swore him to secrecy.

Next I built a submarine submerged in the water of an unused cement cistern on the battered down corner of his house. It was a place where even a spy would hardly think to look for it. He kept his wireless outfit in the room and the walls of his bedroom and the dining-room, and the way he got it there was by rolling a plank down the stairs and letting it down on a long cord. Finally, when it was in place two stories below, he could explode the chemical if it was necessary, by simply pressing very hard at the same time on two red roses in the wall paper near the head of his bed.

The blue prints and linen tracings were sent in a case along with his wireless outfit. It would have taken an expert indeed to find either one of them. This torpedo had cost me endless expense and trouble to build, but still he was determined to blow it up the moment it fell into the wrong hands and so he went to work at once on a wireless outfit, which he aimed to install in my library where I could blow up the torpedo if his sending station happened to be destroyed.

As soon as I had his blue prints and chemicals in my hands I was greatly perplexed as to what to do. He gave them to me one evening at dusk, and as I walked down the streets with them in my pockets, I felt that every one I met noticed that my pockets were stuffed. Then a fortunate thing occured: I happened to meet Uncle Mart Stockton, a man who had been my friend since boyhood and who was now living on one of my farms about six miles north of town. Uncle Mart was a veteran of two wars, and loved the Stars and Stripes as most men love their sweethearts. Moreover, he could not read a line, as I signed his name only as one makes a picture that he has been taught to make, without knowing a letter in it. The man lived absolutely alone, and few people ever visited him.

I shouldered into him on the street, led him to my garage in fifteen minutes and said: "Come by in your Ford and borrow a wrench—must see you."

He nodded and said: "Yes, it does look a good deal like a wrench, but the young corn needin' rain a little right now."

That certainly was a long speech for Mart Stockton. He rarely said over three words at a time.

Fifteen minutes later he was at my garage.

"Mart," I said, "you love the Stars and Stripes, don't you?"

"Shore do."

"Well, Mart, suppose I had a secret that if some other nation got it, especially one other nation, it would enable them to blow us to smithereens. Would you be willing to help me protect that secret?"

"Try me."

"Mart, that's exactly what I'm going to do. Here in this house devils were trying to get the other night." I showed him a roll of blue prints and a little of the powdery chemical. "Here, put this in your pocket and stuff these under your shirt till you get home. Now, Mart," I warned him, "guard these things with your life."

"I will," he said, and picking up a wrench strolled out to his car where it stood in a side street. He puttered about the car a little, and then came back and said very loud: "Mr. Stahlman, here's your wrench; I'm much obliged."

Mart had said only six words with regard to the subject I had called him on; but I had more faith in his carrying out his part of my plans than I had ever felt in any man before. Somehow, those six words of his put confidence into me. I lay down that night and slept the sleep of the just. And for a week thereafter our little Western prairie town went on in its even tenor of its way. The insurance adjuster came and looked over the bank; and in a little while we had put in new plate glass, new fixtures and a new front on the vault.

Of course, there was talk and talk and talk, but our aeroplanists did not return, and meanwhile Wherry and I began to make plans to offer his invention to the Naval Department of the United States. That second affair had convinced him that we could not hold it much longer without powerful assistance. He installed a sending station in my library, and now we felt doubly secure with the torpedo.

I was really happy in the thought of what we were about to accomplish for our country and in the interest of world peace. Just one thing worried me. I was now completely and hopelessly in love with my beautiful stenographer, and I saw very plainly that Nate was, also. He called on her all too often. He seemed actually to have forgotten that Jennie Sells was in existence. But for this those days and to May and early June would have been days of absolute delight for me.

One night I called on Miss Frost and remained talking to her till a rather late hour. To tell the truth, I was trying to work up courage enough to propose to her, but I could not. I went home and lay down and dreamed of her. In my dreams, in the exaggerated way that dreams have of impressing one, she was more beautiful than she had ever been during waking hours. She [illegible] more in love with her. She [illegible] me and played for me, then got up to dance for me, but in the midst of dancing, she suddenly hurled a bomb at me, which exploded and sent me flying into a million pieces over my head, so that I was almost smothered by the falling debris.

And suddenly I awoke, as one does at the climaxes of one's dreams. It was a balmy, starry night. Some delicious fluid, a caress was blowing from the south. There was a scent of blossoming wistaria in the air, and a scent of wild alfalfa from the buffalo flats south of town. It was really intoxicating. I got up and dressed myself, hardly knowing what was in my mind to do. But as soon as I was out of the house my feet turned instinctively toward those buffalo flats where the wild apple was blooming. I struck a match to light a cigar and look at my watch. It was two o'clock. A low moon was riding like a boat well down in the west. It was indeed a witching hour.

And I seemed to see the woman I loved in everything before me. The south wind was like her breath, as I had felt it on my cheek once or twice when she had stood near me in the office or in Mr. Peevy's sitting-room. The stars were like her eyes for depth and mystery. The whispering of the night wind in the [illegible] was like her whisper, as it promised to whisper to me of love in later days. Then suddenly I heard her gentle voice, speaking soft and low. I wondered if it could be my own imagining.

"I love you," the voice was saying. "Oh, I love you above all men on earth!" I stood spellbound. The voice went on. "But you have not yet proved your love for me and your faith in me. Do you think I want to marry a man who believes me an adventuress and a spy?"

It was as if her voice was answering something in my thoughts, for I never had been more off the feeling that this woman was connected with the three men of the aeroplane. But the next sentence she uttered shook me to the soul. I came suddenly down from the clouds.

"You trusted Jennie Sells absolutely when you declared your love in love with her. Nathan Wherry, what thing is it that keeps you from trusting me as you did her?"

I strained every nerve to catch what he might say. I was glad now that my cigar had gone out in my distraction and I had thrown it away. Nathan, like the fool he was, did not smoke, and they could have detected the odor of my cigar.

"The fool!" I thought. "Here he is away off out here with his enchantress and his house unguarded!"

The voice continued: "If you love me and trust me enough that I can afford to be your wife, you will bring me this torpedo to keep. Don't you know I would keep it absolutely safe?"

"Oh, I love you, I love you, Pauline!" came the voice of the tortured Wherry. "But you don't know what you are asking. You are so innocent and so unworldly that you don't realize how serious this matter is."

"You don't love me," cried the girl, pettishly. "Just go back to Jennie Sells, Mr. Wherry, and a month from tonight I will be the honored bride of your most respected citizen, Mr. Stahlman. He can take me on a real honeymoon, which you could not—and he loves me. He has all but told me so."

A warm wave swept over me from head to foot, as if I had slipped gently into a bath of warm, perfumed water.

(Continued on Page 21.)

RHEUMATISM PAIN

The exact cause of rheumatism is unknown, though it is generally believed to be due to an excess of uric acid in the blood. It may be also said with equal truth that no remedy has been found which is a specific in all cases. In fact the literature of rheumatism shows that there are but few drugs which have not been given a trial. In the hands of some observers we find that certain drug has been used with the utmost satisfaction, but others have found the remedy to be a great disappointment. All physicians however agree that every method of treatment is aided by the administration of some remedy to relieve the pain and quiet the nervous system and Dr. W. S. Hulbert expresses the opinion of thousands of practitioners when he says that anti-kamnia tablets should be given preference over all other remedies for the relief of the pain in all forms of rheumatism. These tablets can be purchased in any quantity. They are also unsurpassed for headaches, neuralgias and all pain. Ask for A-K Tablets.

Attention, Contestants

IN THE

W. D. Boyce Company's $4,000 Cash Home Picturegame

START YOUR CHECKING NOW

The Judges in the W. D. Boyce Company's $4,000 Cash Home Picturegame, Judge Charles M. Thomson, of the Circuit Court of Cook County, Illinois; Mr. H. C. Fuller, Assistant Treasurer of The Crane Company, and Mr. Frank G. Hennebeck, Cashier State Bank of Chicago, whose names stand as a absolute guarantee of honesty and integrity, have decided that the BEST titles to the twenty-four pictures are as follows:

PICTURE NO. 1—[illegible] PIRATE.
PICTURE NO. 2—HIS LITTLE JOKE.
PICTURE NO. 3—GRAND PROMOTER.
PICTURE NO. 4—WARN'S EFFECT.
PICTURE NO. 5—AIRSHIP.
PICTURE NO. 6—BRUTE!
PICTURE NO. 7—LOOKING BACKWARD.
PICTURE NO. 8—WORTH WINNING.
PICTURE NO. 9—A BARGAIN.
PICTURE NO. 10—CAREFREE.
PICTURE NO. 11—RUNNING CONVERSATION.
PICTURE NO. 12—HER WISH.
PICTURE NO. 13—INTERRUPTED.
PICTURE NO. 14—EXTREMES MEET.
PICTURE NO. 15—ALL ALONE.
PICTURE NO. 16—THE SERENADERS.
PICTURE NO. 17—ALL IN THE GAME.
PICTURE NO. 18—LOCATING THE TROUBLE.
PICTURE NO. 19—HER WEDDING DAY.
PICTURE NO. 20—ACCEPTED.
PICTURE NO. 21—SEATING.
PICTURE NO. 22—HIS SUITS.
PICTURE NO. 23—THE SUMMER RESORT.
PICTURE NO. 24—THE TALKER.

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The Boy Woodsman

Or, The Mill Guard

By Milford Merrill

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CHAPTER I.

AMOS RAND sprang backward with a startled cry. A bright object whizzed past his head, burying itself in the trunk of a nearby tree. This object proved to be the short-handled hatchet such as was used by the Indian hunters of the time. Before the boy could remove the weapon it was snatched from its fastening by a shadowy hand, and a giant redman bounded with a blood-curling yell to face the boy woodsman.

"Tigerface!" exclaimed Amos, forcing a laugh. "You actually scared me."

Evidently the Indian was very angry. He menaced the boy with his hatchet, till the latter threw up a defending hand in which there jingled half a dozen steel traps which he grasped by their chains. The sound of metal against metal rang out. A corner of the hatchet was caught in one of the traps in such a manner that Amos, with a quick sharp twitch, yanked the weapon from the hand of the Indian.

"Now, then, behave yourself," cried Amos, as he snatched the hatchet and threatened the big redskin in turn. It was all a dramatic display, and a very much puzzled the lumberman's son.

"Ugh! Boy steal cisaboquett. Get quick or Injin kill-hand, eh?" cried the giant Ottawa, his black eyes red and threatening.

"Now, see here, you red rascal, quit your threatening and tell me what it's all about."

There had been a long period of peace on this part of the western border. In fact, the reds and whites mingled on the most friendly terms, and Amos Rand counted several Indian boys among his most treasured friends. This sudden outbreak on the part of Tigerface was a surprise to him.

This Indian was a newcomer among the Ottawa redskins, and Amos had never liked his appearance. This was the first intimation, however, the white boy had had of his hostility to the whites.

"White boy steal cisaboquett."

"Oh, you lost some maple sugar, eh? Annindes!"

"Well, don't you dare accuse me of stealing it," rebuked Amos Rand, who had always dealt honestly with the Indians of the neighborhood, of which there were a large number, more numerous by far than white settlers.

"Wha-a-at-ung, ung?"

Tigerface seemed to be able to talk pretty good English, altho he often used Indian words interlarded with the English.

"Go ask your big medicine: he ought to be able to tell you," retorted our boy hero, frowning as his eyes rested on the swaying traps. He had found several of these missing traps this morning, and half suspected the Indians of having stolen them. He had missed more than one valuable fur-bearing animal, and some one had stolen after his trap had caught it.

"Tell me all about it, Tigerface," urged Amos, when the big redman stood silent, contemplating the ground.

Tigerface uttered a sullen grunt, reaching for the hatchet which was still held by the white boy.

"Not till you promise to behave yourself, old man," warned Amos.

"Me promise if white boy say he no 'tief,'" grumbled the Indian.

"I won't stand for any such accusation, Ottawa."

"Ugh! Somebody steal um cisaboquett, two whole, tree whole bark."

"Too bad," sympathized the boy.

He remembered that some of his youthful companions, who attended the ... school, had suggested "sneaking" a bark of Indian sugar, and he found himself wondering if some of the boys had actually committed the sin.

There were Alta Haydon, Jim Sprang and Hod Kidmore, not one of whom was too good for such work. Perhaps they had given the Indians good cause for feeling offended. It might prove luckless, even dangerous, to thus prey upon the redskins, who so far outnumbered the whites as to make them dangerous enemies.

"Got plenty trap, eh?"

"Yes," handing the Indian his hatchet.

He might have accused the Ottawa of stealing his traps, but Amos did not. He did not think it prudent to enlarge on the already heated feelings of the redman. His father, Major Rand, was on excellent terms with the Indians, and was very much respected by them. The son had all his father's love of fair play, so that if what Tigerface had proclaimed was true, some measly white was earning a term in jail.

Instead of departing, the redman again raised his hatchet threateningly. Amos had not expected this.

"Go about your business," ordered the boy.

"White boy lie to Injin."

"... red villain, what do you take me for?" demanded the now indignant Amos. "I might have brained you with your own weapon; now you turn upon me like a coward. Go, or I'll call the mill hands!"

The Indian continued to brandish his weapon, yelling at the head of the young backwoodsman. Amos retreated a few steps, the Ottawa following.

What might have been the outcome had not a third party put in an oar we shall never know.

From the near distance came the whip-like crack of a rifle shot, and with Tigerface sprang in air with a startled yell. His bonnet top, filled with long turkey feathers, was cut thru, the feathers flying into the air! The shot from the brush had grazed the Indian's scalp!

With a startled yell the redman lunged from the spot, disappearing over the brink of a considerable hill, evidently scared nearly out of his wits. Amos burst into a laugh.

"It makes a difference whose ox is gored," he commented aloud. And then he turned about as a light-running step sounded on the leaves of the wood.

A tall youth of about the same age glided across an open space and approached young Rand. He was a head taller than the first boy, and very slender, wearing long arms and legs. On his h... a coonskin cap; about his waist a ... deerskin thong, from which hung powderhorn, bullet-pouch, and a long knife sheathed in dull leather.

"Ho, ho, ho!" shouted the lean boy, slapping the breech of a long rifle he carried across his left arm. "I made old Tigerface jump, I'll wager. However, I aimed to scare the critter; guess I succeeded, eh?"

"I think you did that, Cave," admitted the other. "But what was the object?"

"Won't be doing stunts to you—tell that, I guess."

"Tell us about it, Cave," urged Amos, when the big redman stood silent, contemplating the ground.

"I tells the hull story, chum," chuckled the other. "When a measly red Injin plays smart with a friend of mine, he'll have to answer to ..."

Amos knew good and well that was the queerest boy in the whole settlement. Our hero had known him about ... years, since drifted into the community from some unknown source. He had injured a leg in a fall. Amos had found him in considerable distress and took him home. For two weeks Mrs. Rand cared for and nursed the injured boy, after which he seemed to seemingly more thankful for the good care he had received.

After that Amos and Cave were fast friends. The latter would not steady down to work. He preferred to roam the woods, making a precarious living from the rewards from 'rap and gun.

"Where have you been keeping yourself the past month?" asked Amos.

"Up ter Glare Island, livin' with old Injin."

"... the half-breed?"

"... same."

"You're a queer ... Cave. I am glad to see you, though."

"I came in the nick of time as 'twere."

"... lean Cave, I don't imagine Tigerface would ... armed me."

"... tell, I wouldn't trust a redskin farther than you could throw a buck-deer by the tail."

"Will you come home with me, asked Amos.

"I reckin mebbe."

The two boys walked along thru the woods in company. They talked on various subjects, coming at last to the statement of the Ottawa that the Indians had lost several barks of maple sugar.

"Nobody but a white would steal from an Indian," said Amos in conclusion, to which his companion demurred.

"Injins are lyin', treacherous cusses," proclaimed Cave, as he completed the reloading of his long rifle. "They'll steal from one 'nother same as white folks no different."

Amos did not believe, however, that an Indian had stolen sugar from his mates. He thought of some of the boys in the neighborhood, some of them who had suggested "sneaking" a bark of Indian sugar, and at once decided that some of these boys had done the deed It might prove annoying if nothing less to the whites, since the redmen were easily offended, and when angered thru being ill-treated by their white neighbors, very resentful.

As they approached the clearing in which the whites had built their dwellings, and in which there buzzed the machinery of Major Rand's water mill, the boys had reached upon the summit of a considerable bluff overlooking the broad Muskegon River, the great lumbering stream of the Northwest.

Down on the flat, eighty rods away, and sixty rods from the mill, our friends saw a collection of shacks and squaws, evidently wrought up to a high pitch of excitement over something of large importance.

Cave Wickett laughed, smiting his rifle defiantly. His companion's face assumed a most serious look.

"The redskins are ... having a time," chuckled Cave.

"What they are, ..." agreed Amos. "I am sorry, too."

"Sorry for what, Amos?"

"That a measly white stole their sugar, for one thing."

"And what else you sorry for, pard?"

"Sorry I didn't shoot Nordiscreet enough to shoot at Tigerface, Cave."

"Don't you worry none on my account." Amos noticed the lean boy, with a contemptuous glance toward the collected redmen.

CHAPTER II

WHERE is Major Rand?" It was a ... question addressed to the nice-looking boy who sat before a good-sized dwelling of rough pine boards which crowned the bluff overlooking the Muskegon at Cedar Pond.

Amos Rand was mending a net preparatory to going fishing at the mouth of the millrace. Suckers came early, and it was quite a treat for the settlers' children. The winter dish ... beans and rye bread, to vary ... with suckers and milk.

Amos looked up as the tall man spoke. He ... the fellow curious perhaps not quite respectfully. This ... the first time they had met Amos Studfield. His former meetings were not pleasant memories to the boy trapper of Cedar Pond.

"What did you ask, Mr. Studfield?" ... asked for your father."

He isn't at ... now."

Where is he?"

"Well, he went ... ."

"When'll he be home again?"

"Never mind."

The insolence of Amos Rand seemed to nettle Mr. Studfield, who spat on the grass at his feet and eyed the busy lad with angry black eyes.

"He'd better get home soon," finally growled the caller. "There's trouble brewin' over the land that makes some folks sit up and take notice."

The speaker turned as if to go. Amos noted the vindictive nature of the man.

"What is your father home tomorrow. What is it you want? ... can accommodate you, Mr. Studfield?"

"No you can't. That isn't a boy's job," grumbled the man.

"Not a boy's job, eh?" from Amos. "What do you mean by that, sir?"

The lad released the net, letting it fall at his feet. He had mended the last hole, and was ready to look for a hoisting pole.

"There's a lot of trouble eighty rods, that's what I mean."

"From what quarter, sir?"

"I'd rather talk with the Major."

"Oh, if that's the way you feel about it, all right."

Amos rose, but his visitor hesitated, not seeming quite ready to call the interview at an end.

"It's this way, Amos," explained Mr. Studfield; "there was trouble yesterday between a well-known Ottawa Indian and one of your father's millmen. The indian was assaulted, and his companions have sworn vengeance. You know how these things run. Once an Indian gets mad you can never satisfy

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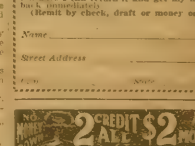

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him. Now, I wished to talk over this affair with Major Rand. He would know what to do."

"Who was the man?" quickly asked Amos.

It was the previous day that he had encountered the Ottawa, Tigerface, and a shot from his boy friend's rifle had scared the redman out of his wits. Might not this constitute the offense mentioned by the soft-spoken Mr. Studfield? Surely, if one of the mill crew had assaulted an Indian, Amos would have heard about it.

"I don't know who it was, but the Indian's scalp is badly lacerated where the man shot him."

"Did he show the wound to you, Mr. Studfield?"

"No, but his comrades confirmed what he said."

"Well, sir," laughed Amos, "don't lose any sleep over this bugaboo Indian scare. My friend, Cave, did hurt the feelings of one redman, but I don't imagine he was badly injured. Was there anything else?"

"Oh, a lot else," informed the man. "I understand that your father thinks of selling out."

"I know nothing about it. Reckon it's a false alarm, sir."

"Can I see Mrs. Rand?"

"Not just now."

"And pray why not——"

"She is out calling on Mrs. Tondo. Call again toward night, Mr. Studfield."

Amos went into the house, leaving the man to retrace his steps down the road leading toward the mill.

"That man is up to some villainy, I'll be bound," soliloquized Amos.

The boy had seen Andrew Studfield down on Glare Island some months earlier, engaged in a drunken quarrel with some rivermen. He set him down then as a hard character, and believed the less he had to do with him the better. If there was danger of Indian trouble, Amos believed this white man was none too good to side with the Indians.

The boy entered the house, prepared some extra netting, after which he returned to the outer air, and made his way past the boarding house, intent on going down to where the white water of the millrace dashed its spray against the heavy current of the river.

A girl came out on the back steps and hailed him as he was passing.

"Oh, Amos, isn't it dreadful?"

The girl, Miss Madge Waybark, daughter of the boarding-house proprietor, wrinkled her pretty nose, and half laughed, half cried, as she looked at the mill owner's son.

"Good land!" exclaimed Amos. "What are you talking about, Madge?"

"About—about the Indians, Amos."

"Well, what about 'em? Seems to me we've always had them with us here at Cedar Pond. I don't remember the time that the reds weren't thick as hair on a dog. You talk as tho it was a rare thing for an Indian to show his head. You aren't scared of them, are you?"

"Well, yes, I think I am," admitted the girl, who was really pretty, with a sort of loveliness that a girl of 12 often exhibits.

"What has made you afraid, Madge?"

"Oh, a lot of things. That ugly Tigerface has been hanging around our place. He even wanted to go in the house and look around. Said he was hungry and wanted a cup of coffee."

"I don't s'pose your mother let him in?" said Amos.

"Why, yes, she did, and gave him a hot cup of coffee," returned the girl. "He was as horrid as could be."

"In what way?"

"Oh, he seemed to want to look at everything. As he was going out he tried to get into mamma's bedroom. She told him to travel, and he twitched his scalp lock with dirty fingers and snarled out something in Indian that we couldn't understand, but mamma thought it was a threat—after we had been so kind to him, too!"

"The old reprobate!" cried Amos, who had not forgotten his own encounter with the Ottawa on the previous day. It seemed that the Indians were bound on making trouble, and had put this painted Tigerface forward as a starter. The boy felt a good deal uneasy himself, altho he was careful not to let the girl know it.

"Never mind," continued Amos, "I don't think there's any danger of the reds doing anything nasty. Where's your father?"

"Off looking after some maple sugar."

"At the Indian camp?"

"I expect so, or up to Glare Island," returned the girl. "Somebody told my pa that old Mr. Blixy had made a mess of sugar this spring, and wanted to sell it. If he couldn't find any nearer he was going there; and I guess he went," sighing, "or he'd been home before now."

"Did he take the wagon?"

"Oh, no. He expected to get a fifty-pound bark. He can carry that much easy enough on his shoulder."

Amos walked on, promising to look into the Indian complaints and learn what there was to them. The boy was wishing for his father's return. The Major had a strong hold on the good will of the Ottawas, and Amos believed he could quiet any danger of outbreak if he were only here in time.

On the previous day a crowd of Indians had held a "big talk" among themselves, the outcome of which our boy hero had not learned. He deemed it best to appear indifferent, trusting that the flurry would blow over.

The actions of Tigerface were not reassuring, and Amos resolved to meet that rantankerous individual and set him right with regard to the proper method of behavior in the presence of white women. The idea of his entering the home of Mr. Waybark, his father's employe, and acting in the boorish manner told about by Madge quite annoyed and angered the boy.

"I'll go up to the camp this afternoon," decided Amos, "and find out all about what's troubling the reds. Antoine Blixy'll tell if nobody else will."

Amos was a good hour preparing his fishing outfit, which consisted of the net, six feet square, attached to the ends of four green bows, the upper ends of which were inserted in a head which was made fast to the end of a long sapling which was hoisted over a bent, set firmly in the ground at the edge of the water, near the mouth of the milltail, where the fish gathered in schools as they made their way up the swift-flowing dugway to a spot beneath the great waterwheel of the mill.

This dipnet was the same as that universally used by both red and white fishermen along the Western rivers at this time. In later years the States have passed laws forbidding this kind of fishing.

Dropping in his net, Amos sat down to await results. After a ten-minute wait he sprang up and drew his net. Three black suckers rewarded him.

Removing the catch, resetting his net, Amos turned at sound of a cheery whistle, to see an ashen canoe, containing a single occupant, approaching from up the stream.

The white boy at once recognized the boatman as Antoine Blixy, son of the old half-breed raftsman and hunter, whose home was a mile above, on Glare Island. The young half-blood landed just above the milltail and sprang to land. After securing his canoe, he drew a wrapped bundle from the craft and approached Amos. This bundle proved to be a venison ham, the only part of the deer the Indians ever saved from their killings.

"For us?" asked Amos, smiling pleasantly as Antoine laid the wrapped meat at his feet.

"Yes, yes," laughed the other. "Your pa told me to fetch it."

"All right."

The two boys sat down side by side, the half-breed producing a pipe, which he filled and lighted. The laugh on the Indian boy's lips died out, a stern seriousness replacing it.

CHAPTER III.

FOR several minutes there was silence. Antoine broke this at length by saying: "The Major's gone away?"

"Father is in Chicago," answered Amos.

"Wish he was here." Antoine was as laconic as his Indian ancestors.

"I wish so, too," agreed Amos, "altho I can't tell why. There seems to be a lot of growling down at the camp."

"Yes, a lot of it."

"What's it all about, Antoine?"

"Maple sugar."

"Ah, that stolen bark of sugar!" exclaimed the white boy. "Well, I am sorry that somebody's so mean, but——"

"If the Major was here," broke in Antoine, "he might make it right; but Anson Waybark, him no good. He make trouble."

Our boy hero pricked up his ears and listened. Mr. Waybark was a trusted employe of his father's; in fact, Major Rand trusted him with many business transactions, and he had made good in every instance. Amos was curious. He called to mind the fears of pretty Madge, and the actions of that impudent red villain Tigerface. It seemed that Mr. Waybark was under suspicion of some sort, and the white boy was determined to learn all there was to know.

When Major Rand absented himself from Cedar Pond things were left in charge of Anson Waybark.

"What," he asked, "has Mr. Waybark got to do with this, Antoine?"

"He stole the sugar!"

"What?" almost screamed Amos. "Anson Waybark steal sugar! What nonsense."

"If the Major was here [illegible] better," grunted Antoine, smok[illegible]

"Well, what's the use of repeating that, Antoine? My father isn't here; even if he was, he'd take no stock in Indian lies about his foreman. Don't repeat them, that's all."

Antoine got to his feet. He evidently felt hurt at the remarks of his white friend. Amos laid a silver quarter in his palm, the exact price for which every venison ham sold. Then the white boy detained Blixy to ask more particulars. He remembered hearing a [illegible] noise down at the Indian camp [illegible] small hours of the previous night. The Ottawas had held a powwow at their village, doubtless over the loss of the sugar.

During all the feeling of unrest that stirred the air, Amos Rand had felt no particular fear. His mother, a d[illegible] New England woman, had cautioned him to be careful not to anger any of the redmen, and he had tried to obey her injunction to the letter. He was co[illegible] he had done this, save in the [illegible] of Tigerface, and it was rather [illegible] Wickett's fault than his own that that hardened savage had met with deserved rebuff because of his violent actions.

At the water's edge Antoine [illegible] turned back to look at Amos. R[illegible] his clay pipe, he thrust it into a p[illegible] saying:

"Don't go down there today," [illegible] pointing toward where the bar[illegible] of the Ottawas studded the lower [illegible] next the river.

"Oh, say now, but I think I [illegible]" laughed the white boy. "I want to learn all about this stolen sugar business. If anybody is accusing Mr. Waybark I want to know about it and put them right. There isn't a squarer man on the Mus[illegible]gon than he is."

Antoine shook his head, saying nothing. Amos sprang down to the canoe as the half-breed was about to shove off.

"I will go with you, Antoine," he cried, stepping into the canoe.

As the half-breed paddled up the stream his passenger watched him narrowly. The two were friends, and Amos believed Antoine was to be trusted.

"Now, what is it all about?" [illegible] Amos, when they were well out into the stream. "I know about the theft of sugar, but haven't heard the particulars."

The half-breed went on to tell what was known. Three barks of sugar, holding about fifty pounds each, had been stolen from one of the wigwams while the Indians—bucks and squaws—were absent in the bush looking after the sap. The theft might have taken place after night, since the camp was deserted till late on the second night, when the sugar was missed.

Furthermore, Blixy said there was evidence to show that a man and not a boy had taken the sugar. The Indians had tracked the thief around the hill to the road leading to the white men's houses crowning the bluff above river and pond.

"And so they lay the steal to Mr. Waybark?"

"That so. Track him right to his back door."

"I won't believe it."

"You t'ink Antoine lie?"

There was a tang of rebuke in the voice of the speaker.

"No, I do not think any such thing,

(Continued on Page 21.)

TELLS WHY CHICKS DIE.

E. J. Reefer, poultry expert, of 501 Reefer Bldg., Kansas City, Mo., is giving away free a new book which tells of a simple home solution that raises 98% of all chicks hatched and cures white diarrhoea over night. All poultry raisers should write for this valuable free book.

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UNDERGROUND TREASURES

UNDERGROUND TREASURES—HOW AND where to find them; particulars for stamp. [illegible] Morton Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

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Classified Want Ad Information

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MEN WOMEN WANTED. $75.00 MONTH. List Government jobs open. Free Franklin Institute, Dept. R, Rochester, N. Y.

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THOUSANDS GOVERNMENT JOBS OPEN to men and women, $75.00 month, work. Short hours. Common education sufficient. Write immediately for list of positions now obtainable. Franklin Institute, Dept. B24, Rochester, N. Y.

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$150 MONTHLY 8 HOUR DAY. MEN EVERYwhere, firemen, brakemen, baggagemen, high colored porters. Experience unnecessary. 696 Railway Bureau, E. St. Louis, Ill.

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NATIONAL DETECTIVE AGENCY WANTS young man in each county to learn and do detective work. Write P. O. Box 887, Pittsburg, Pa.

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$20 BUYS DEED TO LAND, ALSO INTEREST in oil well that should pay you $100 for every dollar invested; payments $2 monthly; complete information free. Address Texas-Gulf Company, 1105 Union Bank Building, Houston, Tex.

PERSONAL

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DARE YOU ANSWER THIS—LONELY Hearts' Exchange, Dept. 24, Kansas City, Mo. Correspondence.

MARRY 10,000 WORTH $100 TO $100,000; sealed. B. W. Love, Box 1516, Denver.

NAMES, ADDRESSES, DESCRIPTIONS OF girls desiring marriage. Dime and stamp. Lock Box 1, Dept. 3, Lee, Mass.

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CORRESPOND; MARRY — HAVE SWEEThearts everywhere. Membership. Particulars, 10c. Kostner Ave., Chicago.

THE FAIRY CORNER

INDEPENDENCE.

"Pretty vine, what makes you cling
To that cold gray stone?
Why don't you lift your drooping head,
Like all the flowers in the bed,
And learn to stand alone?"

"Little maid," the vine replied,
"You needn't pity me;
I lie here in the warm bright sun,
And have the stone to rest upon.
I'm happy as can be.

"Why don't you leave your mother's side,
And run away alone?
I think you're just as bad as I!
You always want her standing by—
And I want my gray stone."

A THIEVING LAMB.

Mary went into the library one morning where Uncle Tom sat alone reading his paper. There were moments in Mary's life when she preferred any one's company to that of Uncle Tom. He was a splendid playfellow, but the trouble was he never knew when to stop playing. He laughed at the greatest tragedies, and refused to see there were clouds in a little girl's life that had no silver lining, indeed had no lining at all, but were solid black all thru. He always had a remedy—or thought he had—he was too cheerful to be always desirable company. But upon this occasion there was no choice. Mother had gone away for the day; nurse had taken the baby to the beach for his health, the cook could not understand one word of English, and Mary faced a danger that demanded immediate attention and tenderest sympathy. Uncle Tom must be called upon, unlikely as he appeared.

So Mary approached him, her fat, dimpled hand over her mouth and her eyes filled with fear and trouble. "My tooth's loose," she mumbled; "it's shivering on a piece of skin, and—and—it is as pale as death!"

"What!" cried Uncle Tom, flinging down his paper and jumping to his feet, "don't tell me you are going to lose one of your beautiful front teeth!"

"Yes, my top, middle one!" Uncle Tom's face was all pity, and Mary felt that she had wronged him.

"What a fright you will be!" groaned Uncle Tom, rescating himself and burying his face in his hands. "How can your family bear this! Let me see it!"

Mary took away the protecting hand and displayed the tiny pearl that was indeed trembling on the brink. "It's as good as lost," sighed Uncle Tom; "let me give it just one little pull, Molly, and it will leave a space for a better and wiser tooth. Besides," he added, smiling, "I'll give you twenty-five cents."

At this Mary grew tragic, and in dignified pride took refuge again behind the chubby hand.

"No one shall touch this tooth!" she mumbled in a fat whisper. "I suppose I'll swallow it tonight and die, but no one shall touch it."

"Just think how we will feel when you choke!" groaned Uncle Tom, "Mary, think of your suffering family."

"I can't help it, Uncle Tom," Mary began to sob. "I came to tell you some of the bad things I've done, uncle, for if—if I should choke to death, I want you to know I did them."

"Yes," nodded her uncle, "I might think some one else had."

"I—I put that bag of sugar in your bath this morning instead of salt."

"Mercy me! And I might have thought it was cook. I forgive you, Molly. It was a sweet, but a naughty trick."

"And—and Uncle Tom, it was I who put the zozodont on my curls; I wanted to have them red."

"Oh! Oh!" groaned Uncle Tom. "You would better consider that twenty-five cents again, Mary, and live to repent your awful, awful deeds."

"Now," persisted Mary, "You will not touch this tooth?"

Suddenly Uncle Tom sprang to his feet. "I have it!" he shouted.

"Where!" Mary danced about in alarm, thinking the in some manner her tooth had been taken from her.

"An idea," explained her uncle. "I'll tie a thread to the tooth, Molly—I give you my word of honor, I will not pull—I will simply tie the thread on and have an end hanging. Then you need have no fear; you may eat and sleep in comfort, for don't you see, if you should swallow the tooth, the string would still be left and we could bring the tooth back and there would be no harm done. As long as you see the thread waving, all is well, and in the meantime you can have a glorious time playing with the lamb."

Mary beamed above her anxiety. Permission to play with the lamb was rarely given. It was a costly, imported toy, and was kept on the top shelf of one of the cases as a treat for deeds of obedience and other good acts. The lamb was the most fascinating plaything. It was about life-size, and far more intelligent looking than the real thing. It could "ba-ba" in a startlingly realistic manner, and it rolled along with a little wheel on each foot in the cunningest manner imaginable. Then, as a climax to all its other charms, it had an almost human trick, that delighted Mary's heart. She would give the lamb a gentle shove, and away it would dash across the floor in a perfectly straight course for about two yards; then it would turn abruptly, and look precisely as if it were watching to see if Mary was coming. So now, with the great danger hanging over her, Mary could be, nevertheless, happy with the prospect of the lamb.

Well, Mary submitted to having the thread tied on the wiggling tooth, and with relief she saw forty or two yards of string floating down before her. Surely there was safety in the sight. Then Mary took the lamb from Uncle Tom and sat down upon the floor. Uncle Tom sat down also and began to read his paper as if no such thing as an awful catastrophe had been averted.

"You blessed white angel!" laughed Mary, kissing the lamb; "you sweet, innocent, white lambie!" She quite forgot her recent sorrow, even the life-saving thread. She put the innocent lamb on the floor and gave him a tender shove. Away he darted for the regulation two yards, and then turned back in the loving manner to see if Mary were coming.

"You cunning thing!" laughed Mary. "I'll play Mary had a little lamb." I'll tie a string to you, dearie, and then I'll make believe go to school, and you must follow me!" She looked about for a string, quite absorbed in her new play. Oh, there was a good, stout string right at her feet! She tied the end to the neck of the snow-white creature, then said: "Now, stand there for a minute; I'll run over to the corner and fix a school behind the sofa. Mary jumped up and plunged toward the sofa, but she never got there on that start. There was a little twinge, a spasmodic leap on the part of the meek lambkin, and Mary's startled cries rent the air.

"What is the matter?" demanded Uncle Tom, and he and the paper rose from the chair.

"My tooth is gone!" wailed Mary.

"Gone? Who has taken it?"

"That lamb!" No mere words can portray Mary's hurt surprise.

"Mary!"

"Yes sir, he did! You just look on that string." Uncle Tom examined the thread.

"Did he tie this around his own neck?" asked he.

Then Mary remembered, and a flush covered her pretty, dimpled face. Finally she laughed and Uncle Tom laughed and the lamb laughed, too—Mary was sure he did. Then Uncle Tom sat down and wrote the whole thing out in rhyme and made such comical pictures to illustrate it that Mary fairly rolled upon the floor with delight. Afterward Uncle Tom, Mary and the lamb all went to the beach, found nurse and baby, and had the merriest of picnics on the sands.

NATURAL QUERY.

Willie Willis—"Papa, does the Isthmus of Panama join North and South America?"

Papa Willis—"Yes."

Willie Willis—"And ain't North and South America separated by the Gulf of Mexico?"

Papa Willis—"Yes."

Willie Willis—"Then, pa, are they farther apart than they are nearer together?"—Judge.

CRAWLERS.

A little girl was greatly interested in watching the men in her father's orchard putting bands of tar round the fruit trees to prevent ground insects from crawling up, and asked a great many questions. Some weeks later, when out with her mother, she noticed a gentleman with a mourning-band round his left sleeve.

"Mother," she said, "what's to keep them from crawling up his other arm?"

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1917

The Beautiful Spy.

(Continued From Page 16.)

This wonderful creature might be my wife! I should take her on a "honeymoon"! The very words fired my blood and flew to my head like strong wine.

But the threat had brought Nathan Berry to the woman's terms.

"I will bring it and give it to you tomorrow night!" he cried passionately.

"Tonight, or never!" she corrected. "You forget that it is now long after midnight."

"Yes, tonight," he said. "Oh, Pauline, you don't realize what you are asking of me! But you must take good care of it, and never let it go out of your hands. You promise that, don't you?"

"Yes, I promise, darling boy," she cooed. And a moment later I knew he was holding her in his arms and kissing her.

"Fool!" I thought. "Oh, such a fool!"

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* * *

THREE GRACES.

The first Grace was pretty and neat,
And trim as a maiden could be;
She also was dainty and sweet—
I thought she would surely suit me.
I asked for her hand on a night,
All done in my very best way—
But on hearing how lovelorn my plight
She gracefully answered me, "Nay!"

The Grace No. 2 that I wooed
Was frigid as an icicle tall;
To rush her, but not to be rude,
Three evenings a week I would call.
When down on a crystal chair,
I pleaded my cause, all aglow,
I couldn't quite thaw her, ah, me!
She graciously answered me, "No!"

One Grace was a stylish young lass,
Her name was Adelaide Fitz;
Our wooing was hurried—alas,
She hurriedly answered me, "Git!"
So now 'tis a Hobson's choice—
But pardon my ways if you can,
It isn't my fault you'll agree,
That I am a Graceless young man.

* * *

Inspirations.

"I understand that poetry is becoming popular again," remarked Popjoy to his friend Duff. "One of the best poets at present is a book of poems."

"I suppose it's pretty bad!" said Duff, with polite interest.

"Oh, no! Quite the contrary!" answered Popjoy. "It was really beautiful stuff."

Then it was in bad company. Yet, come to think of it, there is some charm about poetry. I've never been able to do writing of it more than in the reading. Every one, some time in his or her life, takes a turn at it, and I've had mine, myself. I remember with accuracy when my first inspiration came to me very well. It was midnight, and I was sitting in a brave right away that it was a poetic inspiration, and I sprang out of bed and jotted it down.

"Then I went back to bed. A half-hour later I had another inspiration—two in one night! I got out of bed again, ran down as quickly as possible, because it was very chilly. The bed had cooled off during my absence, and I was cold the rest of the night.

"There was another inspiration that tried to rouse me, but I was tired out, and wouldn't let it enter my brain. I began to count sheep to keep it away. It was about 4 o'clock when the hippotamus plan, and as he made his way toward his sleeping porch it was evident from the way his long, ragged tail he couldn't get there any too soon. Yet many a night as he would round the corner on his way home, some early citing noise would be heard back in the yard, and he would come ambling back, determined to wait a little longer so as not to miss anything.

"So my inspirations drove me back to my desk repeatedly. Just as I finally laid me down in bed, what was my consternation to hear my brother come into the house and approach the desk where my inspirations were spread out to dry! I heard them rustle as he took them up to read them, and then I heard him laugh! As I recollect it, he ho-ho-hoed and he-he-heed and rolled on the floor laughing.

"In the morning I used them to wipe my razor on as I shaved."

The Boy Woodsman.

(Continued From Page 18.)

Antoine. No doubt you imagine that father's house foreman did this thing, but I know him too well to believe it possible. I'm going now to talk with the chief men of the tribe and see if we can't arrange for a proper investigation."

"Dat's what dey want."

"Do you know Mr. Studfield, Antoine?"

"I have sen him."

"Has he been down there at the camp?"

"I see him, once."

"That settles it, then."

"Eh?"

"That tells the true inwardness of this talk about Mr. Waybark," declared Amos Hand. "For some reason this fellow seems bent on doing mischief as against my father and his foreman. It is time something was done to arrest that bad man's influence among the Indians."

The Indian camp was mostly deserted, save only by squaws and papooses, when our friends arrived at the flat on which the temporary Indian village had been erected. A tall fdrm was seen receding in the edge of the hemlocks, and Amos surmised it was that of Andrew Cloudfield. Leaving Antoine talking with one of the squaws, he started in pursuit of the retreating man.

"I say there!" called the boy, when he came in sight of the angular form of the white Indian. "Hi, Andrew. I want to speak to you a minute, sir."

The man halted and faced Amos with a bland smile.

"Ah, it's my friend, the millboy, eh?" grinned Mr. Studfield, holding out his hand.

Amos ignored the proffer of friendship, saying quickly: "What is it about that stolen sugar, Mr. Studfield?"

"Don't ask me," still smiling. "Some little trouble among the reds. I imagine it will soon straighten itself out. What—"

"Have you accused Anson Waybark of stealing the sugar?" demanded Amos sharply. His boyish indignation was aroused, and he was ready to stand by his friend to the last ditch.

"Who told you that, bub?"

"I ask you if it is true?" demanded Amos.

"Suppose it is true, then what?" the smile deepening on the face of the lean white man.

"In that case I brand you as a liar, sir!"

"Oh, ho! So you mean to fight, do you, little bantam!" and the man roared with apparent mirth. "Why, my boy, you won't amount to shucks in this era of aroused wrath. Let me tell you something, my lad," bending down his tallow-like countenance to a long pale line of gravity. "I warned you the other day, I warn you now that what you seem to make light of is a serious affair. I am doing all I can to keep the Indians quiet. Some have been robbed, and they know the thief. The only salvation for this settlement is you people to give up the thief, and then I will deal with the coyote in a proper manner."

Amos was impressed with the solemnity of the speaker. The thought, however, of turning over Madge Waybark's father to the tender mercies of the angry redmen was a shock to his feelings. Nor was he going to admit, even in thought, that he feared anything. Why, he was even now absent from home looking for sugar which he intended to purchase. The idea of being a "sugar thief" quite startled the boy.

"You get me?" asked Studfield.

"No! quite," admitted Amos.

"This is it, then. Three barks of maple sugar have been stolen, and the Indians want them returned. Old Tigerface was on the watch. He knows the sugar is concealed in your father's storehouse. You must let them search the place and find their property. Do this, and there'll be an end of the trouble most likely."

"Have they seen Mr. Waybark?"

"I reckon they have not."

"Well," said Amos, "he is the man to see; and let me warn you not to send any drunken copperskin scamps like Tigerface to frighten the women when the man is away."

"Who has done that?"

"The red villain was at the house not long ago, and scared Mrs. Waybark and the girl nearly to death. The foreman will be home soon; let them talk to him."

With that Amos turned on his heel, retracing his steps to camp.

This remarkable story will be continued in the next issue of the Ledger. During the coming months many great stories will appear in these columns. If you are not already a subscriber for this paper, it will repay you to send in a year's subscription. It costs you only $1.50, and you will never regret it. Let us hear from you at once.

* * *

He Had No Business There.

"A fellow that was snooping around my place tuther night fell into the well," related Gap Johnson of Rumpus Ridge, Ark. "I heered him yelling and went out after a while. 'Just take keer of yourself till morning,' says I. 'If you're still alive then I'll haul you up and make you clean out the well. If you ain't I'll clean it out myself.'"

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READERS WEEKLY.

GENTLE JABS

Genius is seldom mistaken for common sense.

Never judge what a woman thinks by what she says.

A man isn't necessarily a failure because he has failed.

Widowers, like tumbled-down houses, should be re-paired.

Trying to keep from worrying is what worries some people.

It is easier to renew a good resolution than a ninety-day note.

Misery may love company, but company never cares for misery.

A man sometimes makes money, but money never makes the man.

The man who is unable to live within his income must live without it.

If matrimony doesn't make a woman wise there isn't any hope for her.

There are times when a woman imagines that she suffers in silence.

Between two evils some folks have no choice, so they embrace them both.

No man ever brings suit against the assessor for underrating his worth.

Fortunes await the inventor of a lifeboat that will float on a sea of trouble.

Fortunate is the man who can eliminate the word revenge from his vocabulary.

Pedigrees and epitaphs are intended to perpetuate ready made reputations.

Too many virtues in a man are apt to make his friends long for a few vices.

Knowledge may be power, but it takes gasoline to get you anywhere these days.

It ought to be consoling to the widow to know that history often repeats itself.

A man with a cork leg may or may not be a member of the floating population.

There are no professional female divers. It is impossible to talk under water.

Love is a wonderful thing, yet there are people who would rather marry for money.

A woman can make a fool of almost any man if nature doesn't get the start of her.

A man's deafness has reached the limit when he can no longer hear a noise like a skirt.

A woman doesn't necessarily prove her superiority when she puts herself before a mirror.

Even if a man does convince a woman, she is apt to forget it and he has to do it all over again.

Many a poor man might acquire wealth by utilizing the time he wastes in bemoaning his luck.

One trouble with fate is that it hands us corned beef and cabbage when we expect pie and ice cream.

Home and Health

FASHION NOTES.

Middy styles continue popular for young girls.

Metal-brocaded ribbons are having a great vogue.

Taffeta is coming in favor again for separate coats.

A frock of cream crepe de chine is embroidered with three or four large roses in rose shades.

Besides the barrel skirt, Paris is talking of the chemise valentine which gives the silhouette now known as the bowling pin. And this tightening of the waist is becoming more apparent every day. After the winter of chemise frocks and Moyen-Age dresses it is all the more noticeable.

RECIPES.

BOILED SALSIFY—Wash the root of salsify, or vegetable oyster, as it is often called, to remove loose dirt, then scrape thoroly, throwing into water as quickly as scraped that the white roots may not become discolored. Cut into inch lengths, place in a saucepan, cover with boiling water, add a little salt, and boil until tender when tested with a fork. Drain and the salsify is ready to be finished in any way.

BREAST OF VEAL AND PEAS.—The best part for this is the thick end of the breast. Cut into pieces. Trim the edges and cut with the bone, and then cut into lengths of about two or three inches. Place them in a casserole with one or two onions cut into dice and one ounce fat, sprinkle with salt and pepper and cover with a close lid, put on fire and let sweat until the veal begins to fry; turn the pieces and fry all sides, add the dried peas (soaked over night), and cover with water. If desired, a pinch of mint can be added. See that the seasoning is right. Cover and let simmer till the whole is well cooked.

BREAD AND PARSLEY OMELET—Soak six tablespoonfuls of grated bread crumbs in six tablespoonfuls of cold milk for ten minutes and season with one-half teaspoonful of salt, and then with a pinch of paprika. Separate the whites and yolks of three eggs and beat until light. Add the crumbs and milk to the yolks with two tablespoonfuls of chopped parsley and fold in the stiffly whipped eggs whites. Melt two ounces butter; pour two tablespoonfuls of butter; turn in the omelet mixture and cook over a moderate heat. When done, loosen the sides of the omelet from the pan with a cake turner, turn over into a neat half-circle, brown a little more if necessary on the under side and serve inverted on a hot platter. Garnish with crisp cress and slices of broiled tomatoes.

HEALTH NOTES.

For those complexions that cannot stand soap upon them almond meal will be found an excellent substitute. It should be used in the morning and is not only cleansing, but refining to the skin.

It is said that excessively oily hair is usually caused by an unhealthy condition of the system and that a person so afflicted must give her body proper nourishment for a long time before the hair before local applications will be effective.

Massage will accomplish something in changing the shape of the mouth. Place the first finger on the upper lip just under the nose, put the thumb at one corner of the mouth and the other finger under at the other corner. Hold the first finger stationary, drawing the mouth up into a pouting bow with the second finger and thumb.

Indigestion is anything but conducive to good looks or a clear skin. Avoid overeating, which is bad for the skin as well as the body. Proper diet is absolutely essential to a good complexion. Eat nourishing, well-cooked food and drink plenty of water between meals. See that proper elimination takes place each day. Eat sparingly of pastry and confectionery.

NEEDLEWORK NOTES.

A tatting shuttle with a detachable spool that may be filled on the sewing machine or slipped on a pencil and wound by hand in a few moments is a boon to the lacemaker. It is inexpensive and durable.

If before embroidering, crocheting or tatting, you will shrink the cotton the work will look much better. Immerse the balls in warm water until saturated, then suspend in a shady place to dry. You will find as a result your finished work will remain as smooth as when first done.

The flat Mexican baskets, one-half of which fits down over the other half, make excellent sewing cases, as they can be most conveniently tucked under the arm, and so are just right for the bit of needlework that can be worked at odd moments, or when spending the afternoon with a friend. The plain baskets are inexpensive and can be charmingly decorated. Cut out cretonne motifs are sometimes pasted on the outside, or they may be covered with a bit of wool darning, or cross-stitch. The newest way to ornament these is by means of raffia embroidery. They are now used so profusely to trim baskets and bags.

FOR THE HOUSEWIFE.

Always keep a piece of finest sandpaper in the kitchen. If your cake or bread should brown a bit too much, you can rub it off more smoothly than if a grater is used. If anything sticks or burns on pans the fine sandpaper cleans more easily than anything else.

Boiled linseed oil is the best polish for genuine old mahogany, as it hardens and preserves the wood. Make a pad of flannel and pour the oil on to this and rub the wood well. If there are any cracks in the wood the oil will fill and harden them. Wipe off the superfluous oil and polish with a dry soft cloth. If you will add a little vinegar to the oil it will result in a brighter, cleaner polish.

HAIRPIN CROCHET.

Maybe if you have been doing needlework or crochet long enough you will remember an oldtime vogue for crocheting over a hairpin to form a piece of effective beading or insertion. This, together with many other old-time knitting and crocheting processes, is coming back into vogue.

It can be done on a rather large wire hairpin, or if a larger beading is desired, a wire staple may be used. It is quick work and requires little time or thought, being, once the chain is started, purely mechanical. Use corresponding crochet thread and needle according to the work in some crochet book or the advice of your saleswoman at the art needlework shop.

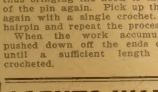
Knot the thread with a loop which you pull over the head of the hairpin, keeping the knot loose. Hold the pin, the thread from the ball running upward. Now with your crochet needle grasp the thread from the ball and draw the needle from the front of the hairpin and under the knot at the back. Bring the thread up again by grasping and drawing the thread from the back again but on top of the loop. Now turn your hairpin from right to left, leaving the needle in the chain but carrying the hook up over the rounded head of the hairpin or staple. The hook will then be in back of the pin between the pin and the thread.

Now insert the hook thru the pin to the front and pick up the loop on the left side of the pin, drawing the thread thru from the back and then again thru both stitches, on hook. You virtually make a single crochet thru this loop. Turn the pin from right to left, thus bringing the hook to the near side of the pin again. Pick up the left loop again with a single crochet. Turn the hairpin and repeat the process.

When the work accumulates it is pushed down off the back of the pin, until a sufficient length has been crocheted.

AGENTS WANTED

AGENTS Get Next to This! A Big Money Maker



A WORLD BEATER

AMERICAN PRODUCTS CO., 7704 3d St., CINCINNATI, O.

Catch Fish, Eels, Mink and Muskrat in large quantities SURE—with our Galvanized Steel Fish Trap. STEEL WIRE TRAP. Catches them like a fly-trap catches flies. Allows Parcel post or express. Write for price list of fishermen's specialties and booklet on best fish bait ever known. Agents wtd. WALTON SUPPLY CO., K-66, St. Louis, Mo.

AGENTS—BIG MONEY

Foot Scraper and Cleaner—Needed on every porch and outside doorway. Right now in the season to sell it—A winner. C. P. Draper, Ill., made $6 in 6 hours; Geo. Cox, Ohio, sells 60 in 15 days; W. A. Parker sold 150 in 45 days; Earl Hammond, N. Y., order for 150. W. W. Hargrave, Va., made $6 in 6 evenings. Wipe quick for tears and free sample. THE HOOSIER SCRAPER CO., 3517 East St., Dayton, Ohio.

GREAT MONEY MAKER FOR AGENTS

PROF. LONG'S MAGNETIC SHOE INSOLES Sell Magnetic Combs and get Unbeatable Terms with orders. They remove dandruff; stop falling hair; RELIEVE HEADACHE; prevent baldness. Sample comb PROF. LONG, 914 Ash St., Pekin, Illinois

Sold Price $1.50

AGENTS $200 A MONTH Guaranteed Hustlers Everywhere Demonstrating the Amazing Merit and Greatest Invention of the age. Creates wonder when shown. Sells on sight. Write quick for terms. Sells like hot cakes. Exclusive territory. Address

BUTTER AT 4 CENTS A POUND Same It cost 5 cents. Write for free sample and terms. Don't delay. Address

QUEEN MFG. CO., Dept. 27, Louisville, Ky.

AGENTS WANTED

Sell our Big 81 Bottle Serviceable for any one, Combination Medicine Case, $2.00 % Profit. Complete with pure drug law. Write NOW for terms. P. F. E. GREENE, 5209 Lake Park Ave., Dept. 28, CHICAGO

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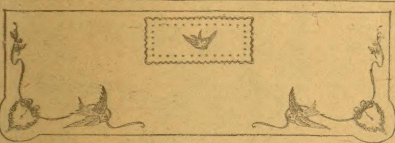
Something New. They catch two fish to one hook. Sell on sight. Big profits. Write quick, for quick, for quick, for

Ledger Embroidery

We call the attention of every woman to the beauty of the patterns displayed from week to week, and wish to impress upon each one the splendid quality of material that makes our offer a great bargain in every case. Every offer is complete. You can finish it up without buying anything extra. These designs are stamped on the best quality cloth, and every set comes to you complete, exactly as described. You are sure to find many articles that you want if you watch the Ledger each week, and it is so easy to get them. Any person can get one or all of the designs shown by sending us the amount of subscriptions to either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade, required in the description under each article.

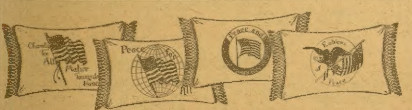
SUBSCRIPTION RATES.

Either the Chicago Ledger or Saturday Blade $1.00 a year each; 6 months for 60 cents. The Blade and Ledger together $1.50 a year (52 issues); 6 months for 75 cents; 4 months 50 cents.



No. 5069, Bluebird Bureau Set.

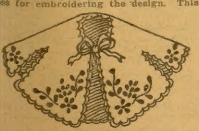
NO. 5069, BLUEBIRD BUREAU SET.—It is surprising to notice at this season of the year how almost every housewife feels that her supply of bureau covers and pincushions needs replenishing, so here is your opportunity. This bureau set consists of a bureau cover, size 18x52 inches, and a pincushion, size 6x14 inches, to match, both of which are plainly stamped in blue on white linen. We also include in this offer six skeins of embroidery floss for working. This set is given for $1.50 in subscriptions to the Blade and the Ledger.



Nos. 5063, 5064, 5065, 5066, Patriotic Pillow Tops.

NOS. 5063, 5064, 5065 AND 5066, PATRIOTIC PILLOW TOPS.—Now is your opportunity to show your colors and be patriotic. You may have your choice of any one of these patriotic pillow tops, which are tinted in highly artistic colors on 17x21-inch tan ticking, including a back and four skeins of colored floss, for one year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger at $1.00. Order by number.

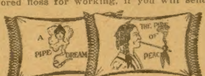
NO. 2005, BABY'S KIMONO—Conventional design, is stamped on white linen. We also include three skeins of cotton floss for embroidering the design. This



No. 2005, Baby's Kimono.

will be given for $1.00 in subscriptions, new or renewal, to either the Blade or the Ledger.

NOS. 5061 AND 5062, SMOKER PILLOW TOPS.—If you intend to give a sofa pillow top to your brother or to a friend to help make his room cosy, give him one of these smoker pillow tops, which are tinted in elaborate colors on 17x21-inch tan ticking. You may have your choice of either of these pillow tops, including a back and four skeins of colored floss for working, if you will send



Nos. 5061 and 5062, Smoker Pillow Tops.

us $1.00 for one year's subscription to the Blade or the Ledger. Order by number.

NO. 5070, CHILD'S DRESS—Beautifully designed and stamped on 1½ yards of white lawn or nainsook. We include three skeins of cotton floss for embroidering design. Sent with one year's subscription, new or renewal, to the Blade and the Ledger for $1.50.

No. 5070, Child's Dress.

Guaranteed Rupture Holder On 60 Days Trial

Won't Cost You A Cent If The Two Months Test Doesn't Prove All Our Claims

You can make a thorough 60 day test of this guaranteed rupture holder without having to risk a single cent. We'll make one especially for your case and let you see for yourself how it takes all the misery out of being ruptured.

Away With Leg-Strap and Spring Trusses

So far as we know, our guaranteed rupture holder is the only thing of any kind for rupture that you can get on 60 days' trial—the only thing we know of good enough to stand such a long and thorough test. It's the famous Cluthe Automatic Massaging Truss—made on an absolutely new principle—has 18 patented features. Self-adjusting. Does away with the misery of wearing belts, leg-straps and springs. Guaranteed to hold at all times—including when you are working, taking a bath, etc. Has cured in case after case that seemed hopeless.

Write for Free Book of Advice—Cloth-bound, 104 pages. Explains the dangers of operation. Shows just what's wrong with elastic and spring trusses, and why drugstores should no more be allowed to fit trusses than to perform operations. Exposes the humbugs—shows how old-fashioned worthless trusses are sold under false and misleading names. Tells all about the care and attention we give you. Endorsements from over 5000 people, including physicians. Write to-day—find out how you can prove every word we say by making a 60 day test without risking a penny.

Box 25—Cluthe Co., 125 E. 23rd St., New York City

Wise Chinese.

After having her blood curdled by a thrilling story, Mrs. Kurious was angry to find that it ended in an advertisement for somebody's tooth powder.

With a pout she threw the paper containing the deception across the room.

"What's the matter, dearie?" asked her husband.

Mrs. Kurious told him her trouble and wound up with the remark:

"Now, Jeremiah, I know why the Chinese people begin reading at the end instead of the beginning. Their intelligence is greater than ours."

* * *

Quite Enough.

"Please, sir," piped the tiny customer, whose head scarcely reached the counter, "father wants some oak varnish."

"How much does your father want, my little man?" inquired the smiling salesman.

"Father says you was to fill this," replied the little fellow, handing over a pint jar.

It was duly filled and handed back.

"Father will pay you next Saturday," said the recipient, casually. Then the face of the shopkeeper grew dark.

"We don't give credit here," he said. "Give me back the jar."

Meekly the small boy handed back the jar, which was emptied and returned with a scowl.

"Thank you, sir," he said. "Father said you'd be sure to leave enough round the sides for him to finish the job he wants to do, and you have, sir."

This Stylish SUIT FREE

We want you to get one of these suits absolutely FREE, so you can show it to your friends. No doubt about it, you will

Be The Best Dressed Man in Your Town

It will be a big advertisement for us. Never before have we been able to make such a wonderful offer—Best Clothes—Nobbiest Fabrics—Classiest Styles—Lowest Prices.

$2,500.00 a Year and Two Suits For Yourself

Here's the greatest opportunity you ever heard of. A big salary for little work during your spare time. If you want to make $2,500.00 a year and get YOUR OWN CLOTHES FREE—write at once for our wonderful offer.

The Progress Tailoring Co. Dept. 812 Chicago

PATTERN COUPONS FREE!

Hundreds of Patterns to Select From

The great difficulty in making one's own garments is to get suitable patterns. Our women readers could make many pretty and useful things for themselves and their children if they could get well-made patterns. We have arranged to give our readers a pattern service unexcelled.

We have a splendid offer of the best and most fashionable patterns that can be produced by the greatest designers of New York and Paris, and what is more, these patterns will be within the reach of every one, and every one will have a wide selection to choose from. Read our splendid offer below.

9367 Belted Coat 34 to 42 bust. Price 15 cts.

9366 Side Plaited Skirt 24 to 32 waist. Price 15 cts.

9331 Costume with Tucked Panel Front 34 to 42 bust. Price 15 cts.

9358 Blouse with Tucked or Gathered Front 34 to 44 bust. Price 15 cts.

9368 Four Piece Skirt 24 to 32 waist. Price 15 cts.

9363 Bodice with Square Neck, 34 to 42 bust. Price 15 cts.

9341 Tunic Skirt, 24 to 32 waist. Price 15 cts.

9373 Corset Cover 36 to 46 bust. Price 10 cts.

9369 Girl's Dress 10 to 14 years. Price 15 cts.

9372 Child's Dress, 2, 4 and 6 years. Price 10 cts.

9379 Boy's Suit, 2, 4 and 6 years. Price 10 cts.

HOW TO GET THE FREE PATTERNS

Here is the way we will do it: To every one who will send us one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger we will send absolutely free five pattern coupons. Each coupon will be good for one pattern and you can select the patterns from those illustrated in any issue of the Chicago Ledger. When you see a pattern that you like all you have to do is to send us a coupon and it will be sent to you at once. In this way you will have hundreds of patterns from which to pick the five that you will be entitled to, and you have all the time you need to pick out the ones you want.

These patterns are the best that can be made. Each pattern gives full directions for the cutting and making, with information as to the amount of cloth required, etc., so that any one can make any of the designs illustrated with no trouble at all. At the same time, they are so stylish and accurately cut that dressmakers and seamstresses all over the country will be quick to take advantage of this liberal offer. Some will subscribe for two years so they can get ten coupons. These designs are made by the best designers and modists of New York and Paris, and are up-to-the-minute in fashion and beauty.

We treat old and new customers alike on this splendid offer. If you are already a subscriber send in a dollar and we will send you the five pattern coupons and extend your subscription one year from the time it now expires.

To get these five coupons entitling you to five patterns, fill out the blank below and enclose it with one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. Do this now—today! No woman should be without the Ledger's Pattern Coupon Book. Be among the thousands of women who will get these coupons.

If you wish any pattern from those advertised in this issue, mark the number and size on the margin and we will retain a coupon for each pattern we send you when we send you the Coupon Book. (Order by size and number.) **Coupons good for six months.**

..........................CUT THIS OUT AND SEND TO US..........................

THE CHICAGO LEDGER, 500 N. Dearborn Street, Chicago, Ill.

Enclosed please find one dollar for a year's subscription to the Chicago Ledger. This entitles me to Five Pattern Coupons. **Canada Subscription Price $1.50 per year.**

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The Vegetarian.

A senior pupil teacher who was noted for his dilatory habits and slovenly appearance, was one day instructing his class in the art of economy.

"Boys," he said, extending his not over-clean fingers in the direction of the class—"boys, in addition to being a total abstainer and nonsmoker, I am a vegetarian. Now, Johnny Brown, tell me, what is a vegetarian?"

"If you please, sir," answered Johnny Brown, glancing toward the extended fingers, "it must be a man who doesn't use soap!"

Spear Points the Way

My NEW Book of a Thousand Bargains Free to Everybody

My new catalog is the biggest and finest I have ever issued. It is new all through and shows *everything for the home*—all sold on long-time credit. Every article is illustrated (many in beautiful colors) and fully described as to construction, materials and finish down to the smallest detail. The book contains also a very pretty story, "The Love Lamp," which you'll enjoy reading.

This book has been very expensive to make but I want you to have one, because it proves that I Save you Money—lots of it, and because looking through it is equal to visiting all my eight big stores and warehouses in Pittsburgh, New York and Cincinnati. Without leaving your home, without the discomforts of shopping, you can, with your family to help, take your own time in selecting the furniture and household goods you want.

Thousands of people Buy All their Furniture and household goods from me because they always get fair, square and liberal treatment. It is this policy which has made the Spear business grow to its immense size.

Your satisfaction must be complete or I won't keep your money. Everything I sell is sold on 30 days' home trial and use. If you are not entirely pleased with Spear merchandise return it and I will refund your first payment and pay all freight charges both ways. You won't be out a penny.

There are absolutely no strings to this offer, and I give you the longest time to pay, too.

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Spear of Pittsburgh

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Outfit consists of a handsome, strongly constructed Iron Bed, in 4 ft. 6 in. width only, and in blue, green or plain white enamel; rust-proof steel link fabric spring fastened to angle steel helical springs; well made 50 lb. cotton top mattress and a pair of select, sanitary, well covered feather pillows. This bed is a great big value and will be shipped on 30 days' trial. Return it at our expense if not satisfactory, and your first payment as well as freight charges will be refunded.

Send Only **50c** With Order

Total Price **$11.95**

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Furniture, Carpets Rugs, Portieres Clocks, Watches Silverware Jewelry, Dishes Guns, Linoleum Lace Curtains Go-Carts Stoves, Ranges Sewing Machines Washing Machines Springs, Bedding Mattresses, Bicycles

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I have full confidence in everyone who wants to make his or her home pleasant, refined and well furnished. After all these years my faith in the profound honesty of the American home-maker cannot be shaken.

My terms are easy, and you will have the longest time to pay. All my dealings are confidential, fair and liberal. Why delay in getting the things you have long yearned for, when this fine, big opportunity is before you?

Nowhere else will you get better terms or lower prices. I am ready to open your charge account as soon as I hear from you.

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When you deal with the House of Spear your satisfaction must be complete or I don't want to take your money. I want every customer to have only praise for his dealings with me.

All my merchandise is sent on 30 days' home trial and use with an Iron-Clad Guarantee that unless you are entirely pleased you can return any article after a month's trial.

Your first payment will be refunded; I will pay all freight charges—you won't be out a penny.

This means that you can try anything we send you—if a carpet or rug put it on the floor, if a stove keep a fire in it—for thirty days. There are absolutely no strings to this offer. That's the way I like to do business, and that is why I am the Home Furnisher to the people of America.

Use this Kitchen Cabinet 30 Days

50c With Order and 50c a month pays for this Kitchen Cabinet. This is an ideal value in a fine, low priced kitchen cabinet. It is made of select solid oak finished golden. Material and workmanship guaranteed. The hardwood base top measures 41 by 26 inches. Has 45 pound capacity flour bin with sifter, roomy china closet and plenty of drawer and utensil space. Cupboard doors are fitted with attractive art glass, and all trimmings are of the neatest design. This cabinet will give the utmost of satisfaction, and will be shipped on 30 days' trial. Return at our expense if not satisfactory and your money will be refunded. Price **$11.95**

Send Only 50c With Order

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It is difficult to describe in such a small space the merit of this new Tapestry Brussels rug. The face is made of serviceable wool carpet yarn, closely woven, and is an unusually striking pattern. The neat medallion center is rich and pleasing, neatly arranged with a rose wreath surrounding, and a very pretty border. Has brown, green, tan and light colorings. Our price of $13.95 is exceptionally low, and we will ship the rug to you on 30 days' home trial. If it does not please you, send it back at our expense and we will refund your first payment and money you have paid for freight.

$13.95 Size 6½ x 11 Feet

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